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Hafa Adai!

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75¢

IPI OK'd to run Mariana Resort

JON PEREZ

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC Special Projects senior vice president Viola Alepuyo, left, explains certain parts of their request to Commonwealth Lottery Commission member Larrisa Larson and chair Mark Rabauliman in yesterday's meeting at the Office of the Governor's conference room on Capital Hill.

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC is set to take over the management of the Mariana Resort & Spa after the Commonwealth Lottery Commission approved its request to run the hotel in yesterday's meeting on Capital Hill.

In particular, IPI was approved to operate Mariana Resort as a less than a four- or five-star property.

This was part of the request the company submitted to the commission last month. That request included an extension on the deadline to build the initial gaming facility in Garapan, which was approved, and allowing IPI to open the planned integrated resort in phases; the commission still has to discuss that at its next meeting.

CLC chair Mark Rabauliman said that yesterday's meeting was to discuss if they would allow IPI's request to operate Mariana Resort and the surrounding facilities of the Marpi property that included the Olympic-

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2 vessels in distress

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A vessel that was making its way back to Saipan from Rota over the weekend nearly sunk off the coast of Tinian before being towed to Tinian by Boating Safety of the Department of Public Safety.

According to a Department of Public Safety report, DPS Dispatch received a call on Friday, Sept. 21, at about 4:35am, from a distressed vessel west of Tinian. The operator of the vessel, *Bottoms Up,* reported he was heading back to Saipan from Rota when the boat started taking in water.

According to the vessel's operator, he made contact with a passing sailboat, which tried to tow the ves-

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Foreign workers pin hopes on NMI officials

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Ferdinand and Terry G. Dingzon are two of the over 2,000 foreign workers in the CNMI who are either under the humanitarian parole program or hold an employment authorization document that would expire at the end of the year. Come Jan. 1, 2019, they would have to stop working while their renewals are being processed.

That uncertainty in their immigration status is prompting the Dingzons and others in similar circumstances to pin their hope in what local officials could do to help them. They were among the over 100 foreign workers who met with Gov. Ralph DLG

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Red Cross aids over 340 families

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The American Red Cross-NMI Chapter provided humanitarian relief to over 300 families on Rota following Typhoon Mangkhut.

The island bore the brunt of Typhoon Mangkhut two weeks ago and is still on the way to full recovery.

According to John Hirsh, executive director of the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter, the chapter and its partner agencies were able to provide humanitarian relief to 340 families whose homes sustained both major and minor damage after Typhoon Mangkhut.

As of yesterday, Hirsh said that 60

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Local

IPI comes to Rota's aid in Mangkhut recovery

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rota Mayor Efraim Atalig received at his office yesterday morning Imperial Pacific International's Corporate Social Responsibility team led by senior director Geralyn Dela Cruz.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Imperial Pacific International Corporate Social Responsibility senior director Geralyn Dela Cruz led the company's CSR team in the massive cleanup and beautification work on Rota.

Rota Mayor Efraim Atalig has expressed gratitude and appreciation to Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC for helping the island as it recovers from Typhoon Mangkhut.

Imperial Pacific sent a large contingent of its Corporate Social Responsibility team to the island municipality over the weekend and, in partnership with the municipal government, it began its islandwide restoration and beautification work yesterday, Monday.

Imperial Pacific's CSR work on Rota will be two-phased. First, it will provide manpower for debris cleanup. Following that, the CSR team will then move to beautification projects.

"This is an indication that Imperial Pacific International extends their services to all of the CNMI," Atalig said.

IPI launched its Village Pride Project on Rota in 2016. That led to the successful repair and rehabilitation of at least five public facilities on Rota. ***(PR)***

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

HALI' INAGUAIYA - SYSTEMS OF CARE

DID YOU KNOW...

- 20% of adolescents may experience a mental health problem in any given year.
  - World Health Organization (WHO), 2003
- Stigma prevents families from seeking help. Too often families are blamed for their child's illness.
  - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA)
- Mental illness in children and adolescents are real and can be effectively treated, especially when identified and treated early.
  - World Health Organization (WHO), 2018

FOR MORE INFORMATION

SYSTEMS OF CARE IS HERE

- As a coordinated network of community-based services and support for children, youth and their families with or at risk of emotional and behavioral challenges
- To foster partnerships with families to improve mental health outcomes for children and youth.

WHAT SERVICES DO WE OFFER

- Natural Helpers Program
- Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Certification
- Family & Youth Mental Health Workshops
- Behavioral Counceling/Therapy
- Wraparound Process

Community Guidance Center - Systems of Care
Call us at: (**670) 664.4604/05 to 09** or
Visit our office located at: San Antonio Clinic (former CHCC Dispensary)
Funded by: SAMHSA Children Mental Health Initiative - Systems of Care

PARADE OF CULTURE

Garbed in traditional attire, members of Tonga, American Samoa, and Fiji communities on Saipan participate in the Parade of Cultures during Saturday's kick-off of the two-day 4th Annual International Festival of Cultures at the Paseo de Marianas in Garapan. MVA

BOE Florine Hofschneider is not seeking re-election

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Florine Hofschneider, the Tinian representative on the Board of Education, would not be seeking re-election this November, leaving the seat open for a gubernatorial appointment if no one runs for the seat.

Hofschneider said Thursday last week that she would not be seeking re-election for her long-held seat on the board representing Tinian. She cited personal reasons.

"I was hoping that other parents will come in and throw their names in the ring because they have children in schools and it is very important for them to participate, but it didn't happen," she said.

"My reason [for not seeking re-election] is personal. [I have a] family that I need to take care of," she added. "It's just a part of our lives where some priorities shift and I really have confidence that people in the community will step up, but it is unfortunate that it did not happen."

She noted that two individuals reportedly sought the seat but one candidate withdrew while the other was found unqualified for the post.

According to Hofschneider, as far as the Commonwealth Election Commission is concerned, there are currently no candidates running for the Tinian BOE seat.

That would mean that Gov. Ralph DLG Torres would have to appoint a Tinian representative on the BOE. When asked if she has any recommendations, she said she would rather look for qualities than a specific person.

"I would like to see someone who has already demonstrated their commitment to the kids and the school system. We need to see people… who have already proven that when the school, kids, staff, and the Public School System needs support, they are there," she said. "I am hoping."

Hofschneider wants the new Tinian representative to be apolitical and to involve stakeholders in the selection process.

"If and should the governor decide to make the appointment, [I wish] that there would be a list [of possible candidates] put together by the community—the Parent Advisory Council, the Parent Teacher Student Association, the teachers. Let them make the recommendation so that it is not…politically generated," she said.

Hofschneider was appointed by former governor Carlos S. Camacho to the first BOE since the establishment of the Commonwealth in 1978. Hofschneider also represented Tinian as the first elected BOE.

"Technically, this term that I am serving is my third term since the onset of the Commonwealth," she added.

If given the opportunity to run again, Hofschneider replied, "Absolutely."

150 sign up for suicide prevention training

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres signed the Suicide Prevention Awareness Week proclamation Thursday last week, just as a three-day prevention training started at the Saipan World Resort.

About 150 people from both public and private schools on Saipan attended the training that was hosted by the Public School System.

According to Yvonne Pangelinan, PSS associate commissioner, the proclamation was an indication of the PSS' commitment to intervening with students who are feeling helpless.

"It is critically important to train our staff and give them those skills so that they could intervene and respond," she said, emphasizing the need to tackle the issue as a community. "The work that the community does together is not just for the students but also for those that came face to face with the reality that hopelessness can overcome [students]."

during

In her closing remarks, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther Muña said that just hearing reports about a suicide of a stranger affects and deeply saddens her.

"In a community like ours, we have people that care. We have a lot of people that care. We have a lot of people that can help and [the public should know] that there are resources out there and people you can talk to," she said. "There is no such thing as nobody to talk to."

She noted that the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, or SAMHSA, has a suicide hotline in different languages, including Chamorro. It is 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

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BLU
Brilliant
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Google
BLU Help
Calendar
Play Store
Keep it simple with a FREE BLU Studio J2 when you sign up for $20 plan. Stay connected with unlimited local talk and text. Plus like, share, and surf the web with 200 MB of 4G LTE data on the widest network on the Marianas.
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IN MAYOR ATALIG'S TRIAL

FBI summons former medical referral acting director

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has summoned the former acting director of the CNMI/Guam Medical Referral Services to testify at the trial of Rota Mayor M. Atalig.

Documents filed yesterday before the U.S. District Court for the NMI showed that the FBI served Anamaria A. Inos with a subpoena at the medical referral office in Tamuning, Guam last Thursday.

She was directed to appear at Atalig's trial in the district court on Oct. 16 at 10am.

The FBI also summoned Julia R. Rivera of the Naval Base, Guam to testify. Rivera was also served the subpoena last Thursday and was also directed to appear at the Oct. 16 trial.

A federal grand jury had indicted the 58-year-old Atalig on a count of wire fraud. He had pleaded not guilty.

Atalig allegedly arranged a government-funded trip from Rota to Guam for himself and 12 others, including eight municipal employees, on an allegedly false claim that he was going to check for surplus equipment at the Naval Base in Guam. The indictment alleges that the mayor actually went there to participate in a partisan political rally last June 23 in Mangilao.

Atalig is facing another case that the Office of the Attorney General filed before the Superior Court arising from the same political rally.

In the Superior Court case, Atalig and seven other Rota municipal officials are being charged each with theft and misconduct in public office. Their arraignment will be on Sept. 28, 2018.

Through his private counsel, Robert O'Connor, Atalig said he did nothing wrong.

CEC to mail 1,383 absentee ballots today

The Commonwealth Election Commission will start mailing 1,383 absentee ballots today, Tuesday, according to CEC executive director Julita Villagomez.

In an interview with *Saipan Tribune* yesterday, Villagomez said this is only the first batch of absentee ballots that will be sent to the U.S. mainland, Hawaii, and Guam.

"As soon as they receive their ballots, they can start voting and mailing it back," said Villagomez.

She said they don't know yet the total number of absentee voters for the Nov. 6 general election.

The deadline for application for absentee voting by electronic/mail is Oct. 12. CEC started receiving requests for absentee ballots last Aug. 23.

Villagomez said she handcarried 3,400 absentee ballots from the U.S. mainland last weekend.

As of yesterday, she disclosed that there are a total of 18,983 voters in the CNMI, an all-time high. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

IPI

From Page 1

size swimming pool and golf course.

"Today's meeting was relating to he items that were tabled during our Aug. 30 meeting. The items that were tabled was allowing them to operate the Mariana Resort & Spa under a four-star conditions as was stated in the [casino license agreement]. The other one was allowing them to open, when they get their land lease and start building the integrated resort, in phases," said Rabauliman.

However, the commission eventually only decided to allow the company to take over the operations of the Mariana Resort & Spa and put all other matters back on the table for further discussion.

Rabauliman said the close to three-hour long meeting yesterday focused much of the discussion on IPI's accountability. "We want to make sure that both parties, in this case the Lottery Commission and IPI, are on the same page in terms of the proposed language."

"It all boils down to making sure that it does not prevent them from operating an integrated resort lower than what is required. That's why we wanted to make sure, every time we're talking about it, the property up north that we're referring to is Mariana Resort & Spa," he said.

Rabauliman likened the agreement to an owner of a building that hired an individual to manage or run the facility but does not own the property. "That is only management that they will be doing or maintaining whatever level they are at."

IPI will take over managing the property on Oct. 1 after Kan Pacific Saipan ceases its operations on Sept. 30. But CLC and IPI must also first sign the contract on or before the end of the month.

"It would be more comfortable for both parties once the agreement is signed. Right now, we're giving them [IPI] authority [to manage] verbally," said Rabauliman, who met with CLC legal counsel Chris Timmons after the meeting to begin drafting the new contract.

"Once finalized, the only thing left is the circulation of the signatures. Both parties need to agree with the language. The specific language is for the operations of the Mariana Resort & Spa. That's basically the entire operations with the pool and other facilities."

Amenable to CLC's decision

IPI Special Projects senior vice president Viola Alepuyo said they are amenable to CLC's decision. That referred to authorizing IPI to take over the operations of Marianas Resort.

Lottery commissioner Robert Guerrero said: "Sept. 30 is approaching and I grew up in San Roque. I know a lot of workers there [Mariana Resort & Spa]. I'm concerned for their livelihood. I don't see what's the issue on authorizing IPI to continue the [Mariana Resort] operations while they are building [the integrated resort]," said Guerrero.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

VESSELS

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sel to safety. The sailboat soon experienced engine problems and mast problems and could no longer assist the distressed vessel.

Boating Safety launched a rescue boat and headed toward the last known coordinates of *Bottoms Up* at 6:37am.

At 8:21am, Boating Safety made contact with the sailboat first and confirmed that their engine was operational.

At 9:23am, the rescue boat made contact with *Bottoms Up* and began towing the vessel to Tinian.

At 11:48am, Boating Safety arrived on Tinian and all passengers aboard *Bottoms Up* were reported safe and had no injuries. The report did not indicate how many people were on *Bottoms Up*.

Last week Sunday, Sept. 16, 2018, at approximately 3:53am, DPS Dispatch also responded to a vessel that sunk beyond the reef of Micro Beach. The boat did not sink to the bottom but had taken on water and was level with the water.

According to the vessel's operator, a 59-year-old male, he and a 42-year-old male crewmember launched the boat from Garapan Fishing Base. Shortly after launching, a large wave hit the boat and it began to take on water. The operator said the boat had an electrical problem and the bilge pump was not working, which caused the vessel to sink.

The two men swam to a preposition ship and held on to a chain until they were rescued by ship's crew.

At 7:44am, Boating Safety's rescue boat found the sunken vessel and towed it back to Smiling Cove Marina.

FOREIGN

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Torres last Sunday at the Marianas Business Plaza to make their case. Now Torres is set to write a letter to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to raise their concerns.

Itos Feliciano, moderator of the CNMI Foreign Workers Facebook page, helped organize the meeting for affected workers from Bangladesh, China, the Philippines, Japan, and South Korea.

Foreign workers like the Dingzons are mostly concerned about the rule that would require them to stop working while their documents are being processed. Some of these workers either have minor children who are U.S. citizens or were given transitional conditional permits (umbrella permits).

"We just want to continue working since it would be hard for us if we stop working, most especially for those who have children," said Terry Dingzon. "We also have kids. Our eldest is 20 years old and the other one is 15."

Her husband, Ferdinand, pointed out, "We're legal workers and we pay taxes. We just want to ask the governor to support us with USCIS. Hopefully, his connections with President Trump could help our cause."

The Dingzons had been in the Commonwealth for a combined 40 years, with Terry the first one to come to Saipan in 1993, while Ferdinand arrived in 2006. Ferdinand is currently working at Twins Supermarket in Dandan while Terry is employed at Summer Snow Kids Café.

When Public Law 110-229 or the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 was enacted in 2009, guest workers in the CNMI were granted humanitarian parole for various reasons, a status that they received during the transition period.

USCIS issued humanitarian paroles to foreign workers who were left without employment status. These workers either have minor children who were U.S. citizens or were given transitional conditional permits (umbrella permits).

Foreign workers under the program, however, have to stop working while their documents are being processed. Most of them will be renewing their papers next month. Others had submitted their application for renewal ahead of the date of expiration.

Although the Dingzons' eldest is turning 21 next year—the age where a son or a daughter who is a U.S. citizen can petition a parent for a green card—the Dingzons must still renew their EADs since their green cards will still be applied for and processed.

Torres told the group that they should provide as much information that they could gather to help their cause that will be included in the letter that he will send to USCIS. "For example, there are 2,000 workers who are on humanitarian parole and with children, regardless if they are 20 or 5 years old. So, we can have our own data and when we're asking, we're asking as a whole.

Rep. Angel A. Demapan (R-Saipan), who is the former House Federal and Foreign Affairs Committee chair, joined Torres at the meeting, as he could also help draft the language of the letter to USCIS.

Demapan said he would introduce a House resolution to show the Legislature's support to the plight of the workers and that would also serve as another document that would amplify Torres' letter to USCIS.

"The resolution would show the Legislature's support for this particular group of workers who are on humanitarian parole and are EAD holders. That's the purpose of the resolution, showing the federal government that we have unified action," said Dempan, "that we have unified support from the executive and legislative branches of the CNMI government. Because these people here are contributing members of the community. These people here originated before umbrella permits even came out."

Torres said he understands the concerns of the group but clarified that their situation is a federal issue. "The 2,000 humanitarian parolees and EADs, that's a lot…and their concern about not being able to work shows instability with their family."

"As I said and made clear, this is a federal issue. What we can do is write a letter of support of the request on the 240 days while parolees wait for their extension approval."

RED CROSS

From Page 1

families had major damage to their homes. All 60 have received relief goods including food, water, cleaning supplies, and more. They were also provided tents that would serve as temporary shelters until their homes are restored.

A total of 280 families on Rota experienced minor damage. An example of a minor damage would be if a home's roof is blown away during the typhoon, Hirsh said.

These 280 families also received relief goods like food, water, cleaning supplies, and were provided tents that are being used as temporary shelters.

About 50 percent of homes on Rota sustained some kind of damage from Typhoon Mangkhut, Hirsh said.

The American Red Cross is now transitioning into long-term recovery. Long-term recovery is considered the rebuilding phase of recovery.

Hirsh said the long-term recovery phase tends to be the hardest and longest part of recovery because in a place as remote as Rota, resources needed to rebuild major home damage is scarce.

The chapter is looking at different ways and means of going about the long-term recovery phase.

According to Hirsh, the chapter is looking at teaming up with organizations like Karidat Social Services and even the federal and local administration to get resources to Rota to begin long-term recovery.

The Commonwealth Advocates for Recovery Efforts, or CARE, is also looking at aiding Rota like they did for Saipan following Typhoon Soudelor in August 2015.

Hirsh, who is also part of CARE, said the group talk about it this week.

Hirsh said the major declaration request that Gov. Ralph DLG Torres submitted to the White House last week would significantly boost the island's long-term recovery effort if President Donald Trump approves it.

The declaration would open opportunities for resources, funding, and manpower if approved.

As of yesterday, the people of Rota are just waiting for Trump's approval of the declaration so that long-term recovery can begin, said Rota Mayor Efraim Atalig.

He said that Rota is almost completely re-energized at 98 percent and water has been up 100 percent.

AS PART OF WORLD'S LARGEST SINGLE-DAY BEACH CLEANUP

5,538 lbs of trash removed from 34 beaches

On Saturday, over 700 people from 34 groups and organizations across Saipan participated in Ocean Conservancy's 33rd International Coastal Cleanup, the world's largest single-day volunteer effort to remove trash from local waterways, beaches, lakes and rivers.

"When you conduct a coastal cleanup, you are advancing one of the most immediate and impactful solutions to keeping plastics out of the ocean," said Division of Coastal and Reef Management director Janice Castro, "which is why we are so grateful to all the amazing volunteers who came out. Awareness has really grown around the issue of ocean plastic and it's great to see people taking action."

In addition to removing 5,538 lbs of trash from Saipan's coastlines and waterways, volunteers contributed to the world's largest database on marine debris by logging each trash item in Ocean Conservancy's Clean Swell app (available for free download from the App Store and Google Play). Scientists, researchers, industry leaders and policymakers rely on Ocean Conservancy's Ocean Trash Index to inform policy and determine solutions to the growing marine debris crisis.

Since the first ICC 33 years ago, nearly 13 million volunteers have removed nearly 250 million lbs of trash from beaches and waterway worldwide.

Every year, millions of tons of trash—including an estimated 8 million metric tons of plastic waste—flow into the ocean, entangling wildlife, polluting beaches, and costing coastal municipalities hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars. Last year for the first time all 10 of the top-10 most-collected items were made of plastic, including cigarette butts (which contain plastic filters), plastic bags, plastic beverage bottles, food wrappers, plastic bottle caps and plastic straws. Plastics—which never fully biodegrade but break up into smaller and smaller pieces called microplastics are of particular concern. Scientists predict that without concerted global action, there could be one ton of plastic for every three tons of fin fish in the ocean by 2025.

"Given its scale, we will need to implement a suite of solutions to stem the tide of ocean plastic, including investing in waste collection and management in target geographies, reducing our reliance on single-use plastics, and rethinking how we produce and consume plastic products," said Nicholas Mallos, Ocean Conservancy's director of Trash Free Seas. "But cleaning up our beaches and waterways is an important piece of that puzzle, and we are so grateful for the hard work of the [DCRM] and all the Saipan volunteers in helping us achieve our shared vision for a cleaner, healthier ocean."

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres added that strengthening protections of coastal and marine resources has improved over the years.

"The International Coastal Cleanup is one avenue that our community has taken part of to increase awareness and our responsibility to our environment. I've continued to emphasize and recognize the economic, ecological, and cultural importance of our marine resources and commend CRM because of these efforts to protect and preserve year-round. From biological monitoring, habitat restoration, research, enforcement, and education and outreach, our region is made up of precious resources and the ICC is a key step toward our sustainability efforts. I thank all our agencies and our private sector partners for their continued commitment and cultivating interest and solutions for generations to come," Torres said.

The CNMI DCRM's ICC partners are NMC ENRO Club, Marianas Young Professionals, San Roque Parish, DOCOMO Pacific, DFS Saipan Ltd., Herman's Modern Bakery, GHD Engineering, National Park Service, Saipan World Resort, MCS Eco Club, CTSI Logistics, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Paradise Dental, Bank of Guam, Church of Almighty God, Saipan Southern High School, IPI, CHCC Employee Association, Saipan Community School, SSHS YEA Environmental Club, Saipan Centennial Lion's Club, Kinpachi, Triple J Saipan, Aqua Connections, Fiesta Resort & Spa, Office of the Public Auditor, *Saipan Tribune*, Kanoa Resort, NMTI Environmental Science Class, POI Aviation, Bridge Capital, and the Bank of Hawaii. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A volunteer participates in Ocean Conservancy's 33rd International Coastal Cleanup last Saturday on Saipan.

Sex trafficking case suspect wants judge's order vacated

A suspect in a sex trafficking case wants the federal court to nullify a judge's order to deny his bid to withdraw his guilty plea.

Wei Lin, through counsel Bruce Berline, has asked U.S. District Court for the NMI designated Judge David O. Carter to re-hear his motion to withdraw his guilty plea.

Last July, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona granted Lin's motion to recuse herself from his case—a sex trafficking case—after he implicated the judge's brother, former Saipan senator and current Commonwealth Ports Authority board member Thomas "Kiyu" Villagomez, as an alleged organizer of a prostitution conspiracy.

Carter was then assigned to the case. Manglona reset the sentencing hearing to Aug. 29, 2018.

In Lin's motion to vacate order, Berline said that Manglona twice denied Lin's's motion to withdraw his guilty plea.

Berline said while it did not take an appeal to disqualify Manglona, the disqualification occurred after the judge decided these substantive motions.

The lawyer said the facts giving rise to grounds for disqualification existed prior to Manglona presiding over the case and were specifically brought to the court's attention prior to the determination even of the first motion to withdraw.

Berline said the issue here is an important one—the possible withdrawal of Lin's guilty plea based on a gross mischaracterization of his likely sentence by his former attorneys.

He said Lin's stake in the outcome of this motion affects his fundamental right to effective assistance of counsel, his right to a trial, and his interest in presenting a defense.

Berline said the facts requiring the disqualification could give rise to an inference that Manglona denied Lin's motion on invalid grounds.

"Lin should have an opportunity to have his motion heard and decided by a judge untainted by the appearance of partiality," he asserted.

Moreover, the lawyer said, doing so would preserve "the appearance of justice."

In her order in July granting Lin's motion for disqualification, Manglona said that, had Lin presented this new information at an earlier time, she would have recused herself even in the absence of a motion.

The new information referred to when Lin included a 2013 private investigator's report of an interview taken of Villagomez.

Lin was accused of luring women from China to Saipan on false promises of jobs and then forcing them into prostitution once they got on the island.

In April 2012, Lin was charged with three counts of sex trafficking and one count of financially benefitting from a sex trafficking venture. The sex trafficking occurred between July 2010 and November 2010 at the Rosen Music Studio karaoke bar on Saipan.

On June 8, 2012, Lin pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit sex trafficking.

In March 2015, Manglona sentenced Lin to 235 months of imprisonment. Lin, through Berline, appealed his sentence to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

In November 2016, the Ninth Circuit reversed the sentence and remanded the case to the District Court for resentencing. The resentencing has been reset many times.

Lin, through Berline, filed a motion last July, requesting that Manglona disqualify herself from his case as Thomas Villagomez is the judge's brother. Manglona granted Lin's motion to disqualify.

In Lin's motion to vacate order filed last Tuesday, Berline said the defendant accepted the plea deal based upon his reliance of his then-counsel's advice that the base offense level would be 14, and thus, with likely enhancements, the sentencing guidelines would be around 37 to 70 months.

Lin and the prosecution sought guidance from the court by filing motions to determine the appropriate guideline; however, both motions were denied.

Later, Berline said, a similar issue was presented to the court in the course of the sentencing of Lin's co-defendant, Yanchun Li.

There, Berline said, in an order dated Feb. 21, 2013, the court determined that the base offense level for a conspiracy is 34.

Manglona's determination, the lawyer said, resulted in Lin filing a motion to withdraw his guilty plea on April 16, 2013.

Berline said Lin's motion to withdraw his guilty plea was premised upon his prior counsel's incorrect legal advice that if he pleaded guilty he would be facing a guidelines range of three to six years of imprisonment while the court's calculation of the guidelines range was approximately 20 years of imprisonment.

Berline said that, on Sept. 12, 2013, Lin's previous counsel filed certain documents, under seal, that contained information about the possible involvement of Manglona's brother.

Berline said that, although Lin's counsel at that time did not move to disqualify Manglona, that same day, the judge issued an order declining to disqualify herself after reviewing the sealed documents.

He said thereafter, on Nov. 3, 2013, Manglona denied Lin's motion to withdraw his guilty plea.

Then counsel of Lin withdrew and Berline was appointed new counsel for the defendant in December 2013.

Berline said after the Ninth Circuit determined Manglona's calculation was incorrect, the U.S. government came up with a new theory of sentencing that would result in a guidelines level of 36 and a range of 188 to 235 months of imprisonment.

Berline said the sentence was similar to the one previously imposed on Lin.

He said Manglona indicated her agreement with the prosecution's new recalculation of the guidelines range, and, on March 27, 2017, Lin again moved to withdraw his guilty plea.

He said that, on April 14, 2017, Manglona denied the motion from the bench for essentially the same reasons contained in the previous order denying Lin's previous motion to withdraw his guilty plea. ***(Ferdie De La Torre)***

Marianas named favorite destination at CITIE

The Marianas was named Favorite Destination of Cantonese at the 2018 China (Guangdong) International Tourism Industry Expo held on Sept. 7-9, 2018, in Guangzhou.

The Marianas Visitors Authority joined hands with Brighten Travel to participate in the expo, which attracted more than 500,000 visitors, 20 percent more than in 2017. Over 3,000 exhibitors from 60 countries and regions joined the event at China Import & Export Fair Complex, the largest turnout in the expo's history.

"CITIE was another excellent opportunity to showcase the Marianas in China, our second largest source market," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "Trade shows like CITIE are an important part of the MVA's marketing strategy to ensure that we keep a diversified tourism market and keep the China market strong, as almost 40 percent of our visitors now come from there."

The Marianas was named Favorite Destination of Cantonese by *Southern Metropolis Daily*, the most influential newspaper in Southern China, based on public popularity contest from Judy to late August. The Marianas competed in the category. ***(MVA)***

PUBLIC NOTICE

15th CNMI STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

September 28, 2018 at 8:00 a.m.
Board of Education Conference Room, Building 1241
Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950

AGENDA[1]

I. Preliminary
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes
   a. August 29, 2018 Special Board Meeting

II. Public Comments[2]

III. Reports
1. Chair
2. Board Committees
   a. FPA
   b. SARC
3. Commissioner of Education
   a. Financial Status Reports
      i. Federal
      ii. Local
   b. Head Start Program
   c. Others

IV. Unfinished Business

V. New Business
1. Proclamations
   a. Head Start Month
   b. Anti-Bullying Month
2. Financing for USDA Loan
3. Proposed Personnel Regulations Amendments re Sick Leave & Sick Donations (60-30.2-720, 30.2-780 & 60-30.3-620)
4. Proposed Student Attendance Amendment (60-20-240)
5. Proposed Procurement Amendments Re Protests & Appeals
6. Annual Report School Year 17-18
7. Proposed Data Governance Policy
8. Proposed Amendments to Certification & Licensure
9. Certification and Licensure Report No. 2018-010
10. Commissioner of Education

VI. Executive Session[3]
a. Legal Updates
b. Personnel/Certification
c. Other matters

VII. Discussion of Agenda for next Board meeting

VIII. Adjournment

[1] In the event that the items on the agenda are not completed, the meeting will recess and reconvene on the following day or at the most expeditious date and time determined by the Board.
[2] Pursuant to BOE Policy 0415, public comments are limited to 30 minutes. We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments.
[3] Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

Main Office: FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055, SAIPAN MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax (670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) hereby gives notice that a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Friday, September 28, 2018, at 9:30 a.m. in the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Classroom located at the Airport Fire Station, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport on the island of Saipan. The following items are on the agenda for the above-referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes (September 6, 2018)

II. BOARD ORGANIZATION
1. Election of Officers
2. Appointment of Standing Committee Chairpersons

III. PUBLIC COMMENT(S)
IV. CORRESPONDENCES
V. COMMITTEE REPORTS
1. Financial Affairs Committee
2. Airport Facilities Committee
3. Seaport Facilities Committee
4. Personnel Affairs Committee
5. Appeals Committee
   (Decision of RNV Appeal- Saipan Airport Loading Bridges Replacement Project)

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
VII. OLD BUSINESS
1. None

VIII. NEW BUSINESS
1. Adoption of Fiscal Year 2019 Budget
2. Supplemental Budget Requests:
   a. Rota ARFF Building Renovations
   b. Saipan Airport Utilities
3. Airport Master Plans
   a. Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport
   b. Tinian International Airport
   c. Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport (Rota)

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION
- Legal Counsel Reports: Legal matters/Litigation

X. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS
XI. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items.

THOMAS P. VILLAGOMEZ
Acting Chairman, Board of Directors

September 24, 2018

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

INVITATION TO BID
MVA-ITB-18-2010

PASEO DE MARIANAS PEDESTRIAN MALL IMPROVEMENTS

Submission Date: **December 14, 2018**
Time: **3:00 pm**

Submit sealed ITB to:
Procurement Office
Marianas Visitors Authority
P.O. Box 500861
Saipan, MP 96950

A Mandatory Pre- BID Conference will be held on Monday, October 15, 2018 at 9:00 AM in the main conference room at the MVA office in San Jose. A site walk will be conducted immediately after the pre-BID in order to further explain the project, and allow interested firms to become familiarized with the site. No BID will be accepted from any firm which fails to attend this mandatory pre-BID conference and site walk.

Interested parties may pick up the ITB package at the Marianas Visitors Authority office between 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday, except holidays or by visiting the MVA website at www.mymarianas.com

/s/ Christopher A. Concepcion
Managing Director

/s/ Marian Aldan-Pierce
Chairperson, MVA Board of Directors

Airline motion to junk suit denied

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court has denied Florida-based XTRA Airways Inc.'s motion to dismiss a lawsuit filed by its former manager for the airline's Asian operations.

In denying XTRA Airways' motion to dismiss, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona found the motion moot since Thomas L. Nolte had already amended his complaint. She did not elaborate.

In his original complaint, Nolte, through counsel Colin M. Thompson, sued XTRA Airways Inc. and five others for allegedly terminating him without cause a few months after hiring him in 2017. He sued for breach of written and oral contracts and fraud. He asked the court to hold the defendants liable for lost wages, damages, attorney's fees, and court costs.

In his amended complaint, Nolte is suing Tem Enterprises, which owns XTRA Airways, XTRA's chief operations officer Andrew D. Lotter and XTRA chief executive officer Frank J. Visconti for fraud. He is also suing XTRA for breach of contract.

Nolte is demanding compensation for lost earnings, damages, and court costs. He demanded a jury trial.

XTRA Airways flights from China to Saipan were cancelled starting Nov. 10, 2017, three months after it opened flights from Nanjing to Saipan.

Nolte, at that time XTRA Airways' Pacific Operations manager, told *Saipan Tribune* that their China service is suspended indefinitely due to contractual issues with their Chinese client, Dream Pacific Aviation Services HK Ltd.

XTRA Airways entered the airline market in China and Saipan in early 2017.

Thompson said that, in April 2017, Brian Dagget, XTRA Airways vice president for international markets, contacted Nolte to offer him a management position on Saipan. At that time, Nolte was living and working in Colorado.

Thompson said Dagget and Nolte knew each other because they had worked together at two previous companies.

At the time, Nolte was 67 years old and had been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis.

After a couple of phone interviews with Dagget and other XTRA Airways executives, Nolte was invited to the company headquarters in Coral Gables, Florida to meet with Lotter and Visconti, Thompson said.

After meeting with the principals of XTRA Airways in Florida on April 26, 2017, Nolte was told that they wanted him to manage the airline's Asian operations from the Saipan office, explaining that they established routes from China in response to growing Chinese tourism in the area. Three days later, Nolte accepted the offer and agreed to relocate to Saipan. On June 9, 2017, Nolte moved from Boulder, Colorado to Saipan.

Thompson said that, last Dec. 1, XTRA notified Nolte that he would be removed as manager effective Nov. 27, 2017.

Thompson said XTRA Airways had lied to Nolte about its ability to fly between the CNMI and China legally so that it could retain him. "In fact…XTRA Airways could not legally operate flights between China and the CNMI at the time Mr. Nolte first arrived on Saipan," the lawyer said.

XTRA's true goal in hiring Nolte, he said, was to provide a short-term boost to XTRA's net value by demonstrating to prospective buyers that XTRA had an existing China-Saipan route and a manager (Nolte) to operate the route.

CLUB 88
THE BEST LITTLE GAMING CLUB IN SAIPAN
is pleased to announce its
September
Player Promotion
SUPER CASH PLAYER DRAWS
with $1,000 midnight super draws 4 night of the week! And a monthly mega draw of $2,500 at end of the month.
$1,000s to be won everyday!
Check out the new renovations and our new gaming machines, the little club just got bigger!
Come play today, for some exciting fun and a chance to be a Big Winner!

H.O.M.E. VISITING PROGRAM
(Healthy Outcomes for Maternal and Early Childhood)

What is the H.O.M.E. Visiting Programs?
The H.O.M.E. Visiting Programs is a free, voluntary in-home service that can support you through the joys and challenges of pregnancy and parenting. The H.O.M.E. Visiting Program supports moms, dad, care-givers, and their families through a range of weekly to quarterly home visits with an assigned Family Partner Advocate (FPA).

What services are provided?
Family Partner Advocates will support and assist you in the following:
- Prenatal Care Planning and Education
- What to expect as your child is growing
- Caring for you and your baby's needs
- Home Safety Measures
- Infant Massage
- Developmental Screening & Activities
- Job Search
- Continuing your education
- Community resources your family may benefit from

How can I qualify?
- A resident of Saipan, Tinian or Rota
- Enrolled Prenatally or
- With a child no older than 3 months of age
- Standardized screening tool will be used to identify families who are eligible to enroll and benefit from the program

For more information, please call (670)664-8702 or via email at hvpcnmi@gmail.com

Healthy Families CNMI

The project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number X02MC28239, Affordable Care Act (ACA) Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program grant.

Chamber: Debates inform voters about candidates

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Informing voters while raising funds for the Saipan Chamber of Commerce's scholarship program were cited as the twin reasons for the candidate debates the chamber and the Northern Marianas College is hosting in the run-up to the election this November.

The hour-long debates kicked off last Thursday night at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center with a showdown between the candidates for CNMI delegate to Washington, D.C.: Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP), the incumbent, and his challenger, Rep. Angel A. Demapan (R-Saipan).

Chamber president Velma Palacios thanked both candidates and their respective committees for agreeing to participate in the debate. "It allowed the community to see who their candidates are and it's been a while since the Chamber organized a debate. The candidates and their committees agreed to this and we're happy for the turnout."

"The event is also for a good cause since the money raised goes to our scholarship program. But more, it is to educate the public and to see where their candidates stand before they vote in November."

Both candidates were given questions on topics about environment and sustainable development, immigration, veterans' benefits, healthcare, education, cannabis or marijuana, casino gaming, welfare, and workforce.

Palacios said the questions came from members of the community after they did a survey on issues that need to be addressed. "Those questions were taken from the topics by one person and that person is the only one who saw those questions."

"That's why it is in a sealed envelope. Nobody knew what the questions are. It is the same general topics that were given to their committees-to-elect in order for them to prepare their candidates."

Close to 200 people watched the event—held in cooperation with the Northern Marianas College and IT&E—at the Multi-Purpose Center while over 2,000 viewed it online, and Palacios is expecting more focus would be given in today's gubernatorial debate between incumbent Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and former governor Juan N. Babauta.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP), the incumbent, and his challenger, Rep. Angel A. Demapan (R-Saipan) faced off during the candidate debates the Saipan Chamber of Commerce and the Northern Marianas College hosted last Thursday night at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.
DONNA RIVERA

"We anticipate more people would be online watching that's because everybody is curious. That's the race to see," said Palacios.

Comments

Supporters of each candidate pointed out some of the strong points that Sablan and Demapan laid out in the debate.

Twenty-six-year-old Francine, an active duty military member who declined to give her last name, said the new casino industry must be addressed. "That includes the workers because it is a serious issue. We have to hit things on target. …That is right in front of our faces right now."

"And [Demapan] mentioned that we need more federal funding, and we do. But how can we receive federal funding when people are dying trying to build [the hotel], laying of workers, and they keep extending [the casino construction deadline]," said Francine, who supports Sablan.

"They say they are going to be done but they don't keep to their promises. If that [casino] is bringing the most [number of] tourists and most income right now, then that's the important issue in the CNMI right now."

Former NMC interim president Dave Attao, a Demapan supporter, said the local GOP bet was on point in saying that he would bring the issues of concerns of the CNMI to be heard by the people in Washington, D.C.

"I'm impressed with [Demapan] and he is on point in fighting for the people. [Sablan] did well too, but [Demapan] brought a new perspective and voice, and the energy that's needed by our community now. I think [Demapan] did well compared to the current delegate," said Attao. …"It is good to know that there are two people who stepped up to accept the challenge to help the community."

Attao praised the Chamber, NMC, and IT&E for organizing the debate. "This was well organized and I'm thankful for the opportunity to watch this historic event. It is really rewarding and refreshing to watch."

Closing statements

In his closing statements, Sablan detailed his accomplishments.

"You can keep me, your representative in U.S. Congress, who has a track record of doing what's best for the Marianas by blocking the $700 CW fee, enacting the [Northern Mariana Islands] U.S. Workforce Act that literally saved the economy, keeping the hospital open with new Medicaid money, getting the money for 24-hour water for Saipan, doubling food stamps benefits," said Sablan.

"Or you can gamble [on someone] who has no experience in Congress—a young man with a track record of ignoring the wishes of our people. Ignoring the 25 percent of our people that voted for [the] Public School System. Ignoring the people's 'no' vote to casino twice. Who failed to keep his promise to raise the minimum wage for everyone. …So who do you trust?"

Demapan said he will be working for the people of the CNMI and not for the people of Washington, D.C. "I will not be a federal government employee. I will remain the people's employee, your employee. That is why we unite as a community. We must be one-hearted. We must join hands to reclaim our seat at the table."

"To be listened, to not just heard, to be consulted, not just informed. That's why I stand ready to be your loyal voice to Washington. Not Washington's voice to the CNMI. For what good is seniority without passion for our people? What good is seniority when complacency replaces purpose?

McDonald's donates $5K to Karidat

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

McDonald's Saipan donated over the weekend $5,000 to a religious outreach program in the CNMI for the victims of Typhoon Mangkhut.

McDonald's Saipan donated Friday $5,000 to Typhoon Mangkhut victims on Rota through Karidat Social Services, led by executive director Lauri Ogumoro.

According to McDonald's Saipan executive secretary Mable Ayuyu, the company considers Rota and Tinian as siblings.

"We are CNMI. We are a commonwealth. …It's kind of a sibling. If Rota gets hit [by a typhoon], we are also affected," she said. "We care about them; [Rota] also comes to help us."

Ogumoro noted that Chalan Kanoa Diocese Bishop Ryan Jimenez urged Karidat to head over to Rota soon after Typhoon Mangkhut hit the CNMI's southernmost island with wind speeds of over 100 mph.

"…We provided Rota families with vouchers and we did some assessments of what they need," said Ogumoro.

She noted that Karidat has applied for a grant with Catholic Charities USA. "The more we get, the more we can do on Rota to provide services to individuals and families," she said.

McDonald's executive secretary Mable Ayuyu, second from right, presents to Karidat Social Services executive director Lauri Ogumoro, third from left, the company's donation for Typhoon Mangkhut victims on Rota, as initiated by Sen. Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota), left.
ERWIN ENCINARES2

Ogumoro said Karidat would be using the money for food and supplies. "We kind of complement what the [American] Red Cross-NMI Chapter is doing because things on Rota are so expensive, so everything adds up. If you have been affected by the typhoon, it would be difficult to get over that hump to make it whole again, so it is a little bit of assistance that will [help] people," she said.

Sen. Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) reached out to McDonald's Saipan and acted as a catalyst for the donation, according to Ayuyu.

"On behalf of the people of Rota, we thank everyone. We have an outpouring of support for our people and we truly appreciate the support they are extending to the people of Rota and [victims] of the typhoon," he said.

In a separate statement to *Saipan Tribune*, Sen. Teresita Santos (R-Rota) also extended her gratitude to those who have supported the island after the typhoon.

"On behalf of the people of Rota, I would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, the departments, and agencies for extending their full support and assistance to restore and rebuild our island of Rota," she said. "The people of Rota are forever grateful and [this support] will always be cherished in the hearts of our people."

McDonald's of Guam and Saipan, owned and operated by Joe and Marcia Ayuyu, first opened in 1993 and includes eight McDonald's restaurants, two on Saipan and six on Guam. In 2016, the Ayuyus acquired all McDonald's restaurants in Guam.

Prepare to write your novel

November is National Novel Writing Month. Want to write your novel? Need a deadline to make it happen? NaNoWriMo is perfect for this! Hopeful novelists can sign up online at www.nanowrimo.org.

But more importantly, and more locally, hopeful novelists can join in novel-writing prep sessions in October at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library. Sessions are 10am to 12pm on Oct. 6, 13, and 20 at the VTC room. Each session covers different topics presented by Jane Mack. There is a sign-up sheet at the library.

There is no charge for these sessions. And no charge for NaNoWrimo, either.

There will be a book raffle (*No Plot? No Problem!* by Chris Baty) at each prep session for hopeful novelists who attend.

Write your novel in November.

And then, after November, when you have your novel draft ready, you can work on getting it published!

For more information, contact Joeten-Kiyu Public Library or janemack@itecnmi.com. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The exclusive seminar included up-and-coming managers and supervisors from various businesses: Atkins Kroll Saipan, Bank of Saipan, BankPacific, Dial Rent-to-Own, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, Friends First Marketing, IT&E, Joeten Kiyu Public Library, Kanoa Resort Saipan, MP Holdings, LLC, Pacific Engineering, Pacific Subsea Saipan, and Staywell Insurance.

Chamber, ITS hold one-day customer service training

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce and Island Training Solutions presented a powerful customer-service themed training "Customer Satisfaction is Worthless; Customer Loyalty is Priceless" last Thursday, September 20, 2018 at the Kanoa Resort Saipan. This one-day training focused on the developing of employee skills needed to communicate professionalism, gain respect, and enhance customer relationships with excellence.

The exclusive seminar included up-and-coming managers and supervisors from various businesses: Atkins Kroll Saipan, Bank of Saipan, BankPacific, Dial Rent-to-Own, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, Friends First Marketing, IT&E, Joeten Kiyu Public Library, Kanoa Resort Saipan, MP Holdings, LLC, Pacific Engineering, Pacific Subsea Saipan, and Staywell Insurance.

Glenn Policare, director of Operations of Kanoa Resort Saipan, said "The training is opening up a lot of eyes, showing positive opportunities and shows room for improvement not just for our business, but for the many businesses that are represented here today."

Another participant, Janet Aguon, Enterprise Sales manager of IT&E Guam, said, "This training brings us back to the fundamentals of customer loyalty and how to establish that loyalty."

Participants learned how to identify their own emotions and subsequent reactions for improved performance; how to better manage relationships by negotiating the needs of others; and improve skills to help others increase capabilities. A major theme in this seminar was to enhance retention of customers and employees, a major challenge that local businesses currently face.

"I am excited at the response of our participants. These employees are genuinely invested in growing their knowledge to improve and grow their businesses," said Jim Arenovski, Island Training Solutions owner.

"We all have a similar goal and that is to ensure that we can take care of our employees and that our employees can take care of our guests to create and retain loyal customers. This is the goal for our small island community and we work toward that goal through trainings like this. Through the chamber, Island Training Solutions has reached hundreds of employees in just the past year. I look forward to future collaborations," he added.

The Saipan Chamber will host its final seminar for the year on Nov. 15, 2018, focusing on staff motivation and development. For more information or to register for this training, contact coordinator2@saipanchamber.com. ***(PR)***

Zoning sets 8th public outreach

The Zoning Office will be conducting its 8th annual public outreach and education awareness meetings at several locations around the island with community members, businesses, developers, property-owners, or any interested members of the public, with the first meeting held last Sept. 18 at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center. The next meeting will be on Sept. 20, 2018, at the Dandan Middle School cafeteria, starting at 5:30pm. The next is on Sept. 25, 2018, at the GTC Elementary School cafeteria in San Roque, starting at 5:30pm. The last is on Sept. 27, 2018, at the Kagman High School cafeteria in Kagman, starting at 5:30pm.

These meetings serve to disseminate information to the public about proposed amendments to the Saipan Zoning Law of 2013 and the official Zoning maps, as well as to engage them in discussions to assist the Zoning board's next update of the island's zoning law.

This will be followed by further announcement on upcoming schedules within targeted villages. The Zoning board and Office encourages the public to join the meetings to learn more about the law.

For more information, call the Zoning Office at 234-9661 or visit the office located on the second floor of the Joeten Dandan commercial building in Dandan. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Secretary of Public Works
2nd floor-Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan, MP 96950

INVITATION FOR BIDS
DPW18-IFB-024

ROUTE 10 HAZARD ELIMINATION PROJECT, ROTA

Governor Ralph Dlg. Torres and Lt. Governor Victor B. Hocog, through the Department of Public Works (DPW) are soliciting sealed bids for **Route 10 Hazard Elimination Project, Rota** Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project package will be available on or after September 11, 2018 at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan. A non-refundable payment of **One Hundred Dollars ($100.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Teasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at the DPW Technical Services Division.

All interested bidders are also required to include Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC can be obtained at the Department of Commerce/Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations currently in effect."

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITUES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **September 28, 2018, 9:00 a.m. local time** at the Department of Public Works Conference Room 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center Office, Saipan. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **October 9, 2018** to **Ms. Crystal C. Cabrera, Acting Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

Prospective bidders should examine and review the invitation for bids with care. If it should appear to a prospective bidder that the performance of the work under the contract or any of the matters relative thereto is not sufficiently described or explained in the invitation for bids, or that any discrepancy exists between different parts of the invitation for bids, or that full intent of the invitation for bids is not clear, then the prospective bidder shall submit a written request for clarification no later than ten (10) working days before the scheduled bid opening at 4:30 pm to **Ms. Crystal C. Cabrera, Acting Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547.

The prospective bidder shall examine carefully the site of the proposed work and the invitation for bids before submitting a bid.

The Contracting Officer (CO) may, upon recommendation of the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR), issue an addendum notifying all prospective bidders known to have received an invitation for bids, or if issued after the deadline for submission of the notice of intention to bid, to those persons who submitted such notice, of any changes to the invitation for bids. The Department of Public Works will make every reasonable attempt to notify all persons who obtained the invitation for bids from the Technical Services Division by telephone to pick up the addendum or if the CO chooses, the addendum may be mailed or delivered personally or by facsimile machine. If the bid proposal requires the acknowledgment of addenda, the prospective bidder shall indicate the date of each addendum in the space provided. **It shall be the prospective bidder's responsibility to confirm the existence of any addendum by telephoning the COTR at (670) 234-9828/9838 no later than ten (10) Calendar days before the scheduled bid opening**.

Sealed bids must be marked "DPW-18-IFB-024". For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan, no later than **10:00 a.m. local time October 12, 2018**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional Seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **10:00 a.m. local time, October 12, 2018,** and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@cnmidof.net. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **October 12, 2018** and the BID documents must be received at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **October 23, 2018**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan, at **9:00 a.m. local time, October 26, 2018**. However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at **9:00 a.m. local time, on October 12, 2018**.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars **($25,000.00)** a bid security of fifteen (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. **Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashiers check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety requiring approval of the Attorney General must be pre-approved prior to bid submission.** Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations **§70-30.3-245**. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than $25,000.00. Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

a) A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and
b) A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceed the penal amount of each bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable payment or performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract.

Acceptable assets are only:

1) Cash
2) US Gov't Securities
3) Stocks and Bonds traded on US Security Exchange
4) Real Property owned in fee simple in US; and
5) Irrevocable Letters of Credit

Performance time for completion of this project is **Two Hundred Seventy (270) working days** upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages will be assessed according to Table 108-1 of the Standard Specifications for Construction of Roads and Bridges on Federal Project, FP-03.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

PETER P. CAMACHO
Acting Secretary of Public Works

HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director of Procurement & Supply

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
editor@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

What exactly do we want from prisons?

Our prison system does not provide a snapshot of crime in this country. It's a snapshot of policies and practices that are a combination of politically expedient, profit-driven, racist, and absent of larger strategy or meaning—to say nothing of being divorced from actual crime rates.

It's well-reported that the United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world. Pennsylvania has its own sorry track record; in fact, it exceeds national averages in the number of people imprisoned, according to the Prison Policy Institute—about 100,000 people are locked up, including in local jails. The majority are black and Hispanic.

Pennsylvania is also a leader in those serving life without parole: 5,346 people are serving that sentence, half of which are from Philadelphia. Of those serving life-without-parole terms, 65 percent are black—a rate 118 times higher than whites. More than half of lifers were 25 years old or younger when jailed.

Life without parole is a sentence that leaves no room for hope or for rehabilitation. The Abolitionist Law Project, in a recently released report, calls it "Death by Incarceration." While most are convicted of first-degree murder, many are sentenced for felony murder, which is a felony resulting in someone's death but didn't necessarily include intent to take a life. The minimum sentence for either crime is life without the possibility of parole. Others serving life terms include repeat drug offenders and battered women who killed their partners.

Many serving the sentence are elderly, decades older than the crimes they committed, and sick.

State Sen. Sharif Street has been pushing a bill, SB942, that would introduce the possibility of parole for life sentences. The bill could be voted out of committee next month. District Attorney Larry Krasner supports the bill.

But life without parole is just one area that requires reform.

What's needed is an honest and comprehensive look, not at prisons per se, but at our values: What do we expect from prisons? Are we locking people up with the hope of rehabilitating them? Or are we warehousing the people who don't fit into a whitewashed society—blacks, Hispanics, immigrants, the mentally ill, the addicted, and the poor?

The answers are critical not just because of their impact on criminal justice and on human lives, but the impact on budgets. The cost of locking up so many people is staggering: over $40,000 per prisoner per year in this state alone.

There are no easy fixes; change will involve local, state, and federal jurisdictions working together. The hardest challenge, though, will be to get out of the habit of using prisons as the place to shut our problems away and throw away the key.

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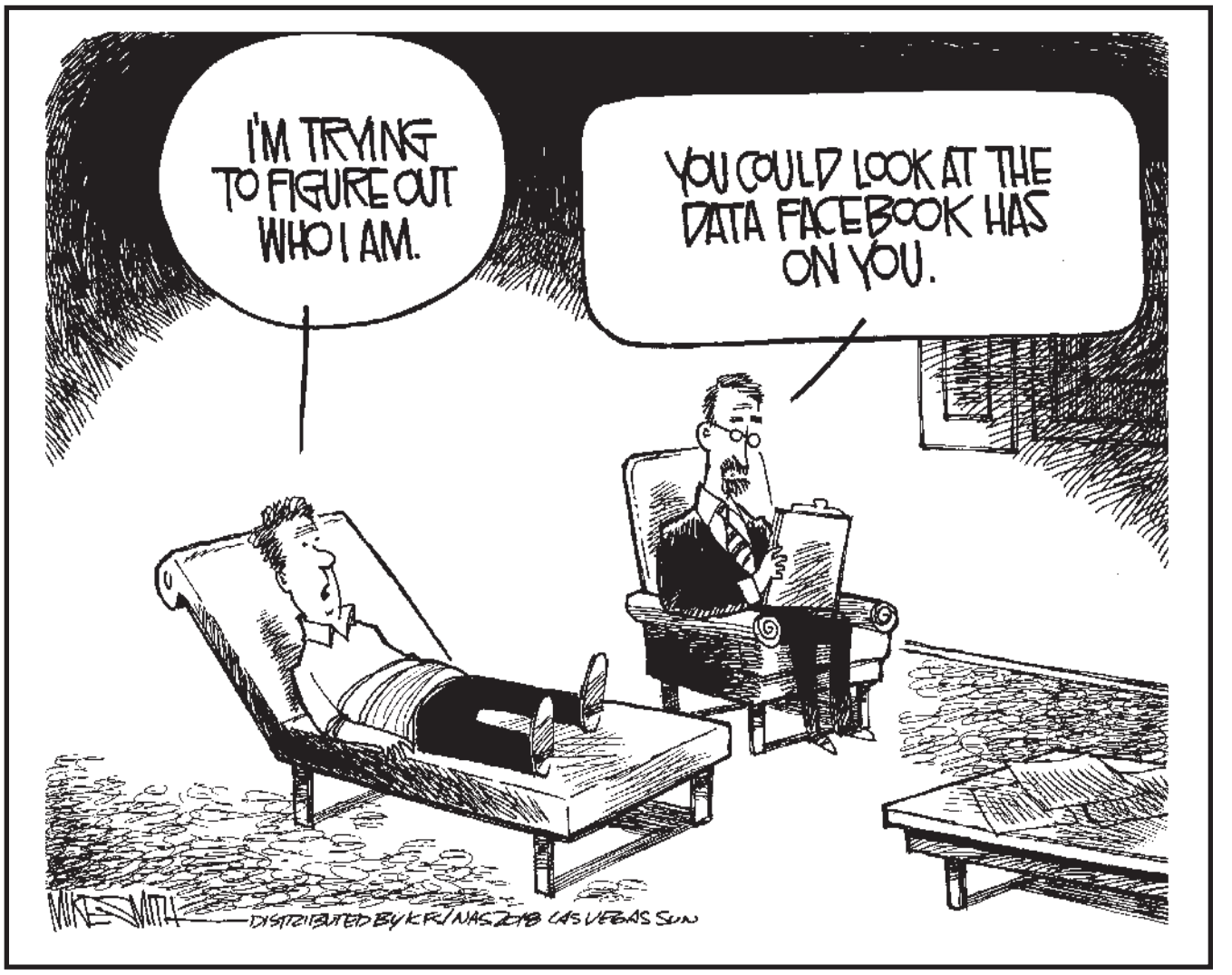
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Have we learned nothing since the Clarence Thomas-Anita Hill battle?

By CLARENCE PAGE
Chicago Tribune

Clarence Page is a member of the Chicago Tribune *Editorial Board. Readers may send him email at cpage@chicagotribune.com.*

Hard cases make bad law, according to an old legal maxim. Hard cases make brutal Supreme Court confirmation fights, too.

The soap opera unfolding around Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation hearings offers an excellent example. The he-said-she-said drama brings to mind another battle royal that consumed television viewers nationwide in 1991 when Anita Hill accused then-nominee Judge Clarence Thomas of sexual harassment.

Now it is Kavanaugh who faces a hearing on Monday to respond to allegations by Christine Blasey Ford that he sexually assaulted her at a house party when they were teenagers.

The two cases fall short of a perfect parallel. Hill, for example, alleged episodes of lewd talk over several years during which she worked for Thomas in two government departments.

Yet the contrast between the two episodes shows how much the Senate and the rest of us have learned about sexual harassment, an ancient social problem that still was a new political issue on Capitol Hill in the early 1990s.

It also shows how much credibility Congress and other institutions have lost in the past couple of decades amid rising populist anti-establishment anger. Capitol Hill's culture of comity that enabled rival partisans to find common ground on divisive issues fell apart in the clashes between House Speaker Newt Gingrich's Republicans and President Bill Clinton's Democrats.

Thomas' sexual harassment scandal would pale in comparison with Clinton's Oval Office affair with an intern. The quest for common ground was elbowed out by a winner-take-all partisanship, culminating in the delay of a vote on Democratic Supreme Court nominee Merrick Garland until Obama's term in office ran out.

Suddenly, covering the cynical politics of the Senate, traditionally called "the world's greatest deliberative body," was reminding me of my earlier life of covering politics in my beloved Chicago's City Hall, where getting things done can depend on having the right precinct captain.

Small wonder that Americans question the ability of today's Senate to deal with a question as delicate as how much Kavanaugh or anyone else should be held accountable for allegations raised about their behavior in high school 36 years ago.

We're not talking about a teen prank or "youthful indiscretion," the traditional excuse among misbehaving politicians. Attempted rape is a felony. In Maryland, where the incident allegedly took place in suburban Montgomery County, outside Washington, there is no statute of limitations for rape or attempted rape.

Maybe President Trump had a point when he tweeted Friday that Ford, now a college professor, should have reported her assailant to the police. But under the circumstances, calling in the FBI to investigate as Ford has requested makes more sense.

So far, the wind appears to be at Kavanaugh's back unless new dramatic witnesses or evidence turn up. Amid a mix of accusations and memories, as we saw in the Clarence Thomas hearings, Kavanaugh has a good chance of gaining the benefit of Senate doubts enough to be confirmed, as Thomas was.

Yet the charge of attempted rape is too serious to be casually swept aside. We have seen a degradation of character standards in the face of winner-take-all politics, especially in issues of sex, ranging politically from Clinton on the left to President Trump on the right.

Ultimately, the standards for judging Kavanaugh and other nominees to come will be hashed out in the political arena, as the Constitution suggests. Already, we have seen in the aftermath of Thomas-Hill a push led by women for more rights, respect and opportunities. Unlike the earlier confirmation fight, this is the era of the #MeToo movement and a Senate Judiciary Committee that includes women.

That's progress. We need more of it. I'm not in Kavanaugh's conservative camp, but I believe in fairness. The charges against him should be thoroughly investigated. Every reasonable effort should be made to see if Ford's claims are credible. If persuasive witnesses or evidence do not turn up, he should be confirmed. And the politics of the future Supreme Court should be decided, as I expect they will be, at the ballot box.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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4 reasons why declaring peace on the Korean peninsula is a bad idea

By TRUDY RUBIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer*. Readers may write to her at: Philadelphia Inquirer, P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by email at trubin@phillynews.com.*

President Donald Trump appears eager to declare that peace has come to the Korean peninsula.

The president has deluded himself that North Korea is well on its way to getting rid of its nuclear weapons. Last week, he excitedly tweeted: "North Korea recommits to denuclearization – we've come a long way."

Yet Trump looks eager to overrule his top advisers who warn of the risks of declaring peace before North Korea gets serious about eliminating its nuclear arsenal.

Instead the president may listen to South Korean President Moon Jae-in, whom he will meet at the United Nations next week, as well as North Korea's Kim Jong Un. Both are urging a U.S. peace declaration by the end of the year as a first step to superseding the 1953 Korean armistice with a peace treaty.

Kim wants Trump to hold a second summit at which the peace declaration could be forthcoming.

"North Korea wants a summit with Trump in order to decouple Trump from the rest of the administration, because it sees him as an easy mark," says the Heritage Foundation's Bruce Klingner, a 20-year intelligence agency veteran who specializes in North Korea. Kim hopes that Trump will disregard the lessons learned from decades of U.S. negotiations with North Korea.

Here are four reasons why a premature peace declaration is unwise:

1. A peace declaration should not precede progress on the nuclear issue.

Pyongyang should first demonstrate willingness to give up its nuclear arsenal. Contrary to Trump's proclamations, Kim has made only puny gestures since the Singapore summit in June.

Indeed, the vague statement Trump procured from Kim in Singapore is far less concrete than past pledges North Korea has made (and broken), notably under President Bill Clinton. As the Brookings Institution's Korea expert, Jung Pak, tweeted Sept. 19: "We should recognize that 13 years ago, they agreed to far bigger concessions. ... These are minuscule moves on Kim's part. ..."

True, the North Korean leader has toned down the warlike rhetoric, as has Trump, which is good. And Kim has gone 10 months without testing missiles or nuclear weapons.

But North Korea has halted nuclear tests before for lengthy periods. Moreover, Kim has made clear he thinks more tests aren't needed for his intercontinental ballistic missile program.

As for Kim's pledge to dismantle a key nuclear reactor at Yongbyon, that facility has been partly dismantled and shut down on several occasions, only to be restored and restarted.

In other words, Kim is playing Trump, giving gifts that don't touch on the main issue, destroying his large nuclear arsenal. (He distracted attention by returning the remains of 55 missing Americans, which is welcome. But recall that the United States received remains of 629 Americans prior to 2005.)

2. Further concessions may help Kim keep part of his arsenal.

No expert I spoke with believes Kim intends to give up all his nuclear weapons. Rather, his goal is to slowly acquire recognition as a nuclear power.

"What we have seen so far is (only) a North Korean commitment to denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula," says Klingner. "But the North Koreans have a very different definition of what that means from the U.S. definition."

While Washington seeks the elimination of all of Pyongyang's nukes, North Korea defines the phrase to mean the initial removal of U.S. troops and nuclear umbrella from South Korea – before fully addressing its nuclear program. Even then, Kim believes he needs an arsenal to ensure his survival.

"North Korea wants to be accepted as a nuclear weapons state, the Pakistan of East Asia," says Klingner. Pakistan conducted major nuclear tests in 1998 and has managed to keep a large nuclear arsenal, despite intense U.S. and global pressure. Kim wants to do likewise, with sanctions removed and economic largesse from South Korea and elsewhere. A premature peace would help Kim achieve his goal.

3. A premature peace will undercut pressure on North Korea.

Since the Singapore summit, China and Russia are already weakening their adherence to sanctions against North Korea. Why not, since Trump said (incorrectly) in Singapore that North Korea "was no longer a nuclear threat"?

A peace declaration could spark political pressure from factions inside South Korea for withdrawal of U.S. troops and the end of the alliance with Seoul. And Kim will play on Trump's expressed desire to bring U.S. troops home soon.

But weakening the U.S.-South Korean alliance before eliminating the North's arsenal would leave South Korea at the mercy of an aggressive and unreliable Pyongyang, a nuclear-armed dictatorship that maintains vast concentration camps at home.

4. Lifting pressure on Kim could plunge Washington back into a nasty standoff with Pyongyang.

Eventually, Trump will be forced to realize that Kim has no desire to fully eliminate his nukes. At that point, the president may revert to aggressive rhetoric and threats.

Neither the United States nor North Korea is likely to start a preemptive war, but the room for dangerous mistakes would be vast, especially if Trump feels humiliated. So let's hope the president's advisers persuade him to press Kim to provide detailed data on Pyongyang's arsenal and permit international inspections—before engaging in further peace fantasies. Otherwise, a premature peace may lead to a premature end of the Kim-Trump bromance.

Reporters used to bury the dark secrets of powerful men. Not anymore.

By JON HEALEY
Los Angeles Times

In September 1999, as the race to succeed President Bill Clinton was heating up and rumors were swirling about Republican candidate George W. Bush's past indulgences, the Los Angeles Times ran an op-ed that probably seemed quaint even in its day. The piece by a pair of law-school academics, Steven Lubet and Steven A. Drizin, recounted how the Democratic Party nominee for president in 1952, Adlai E. Stevenson, defused a potentially explosive secret buried in his past by leveling with the reporter who dug it up.

The journalist, Time magazine's William Glasgow, discovered that a 12-year-old Stevenson had shot and killed a friend at a Christmas party—an event that had gone unreported since it had happened 40 years previously. An inquest had determined that the shooting was accidental; nevertheless, Glasgow confronted Stevenson about it as he was preparing a cover story on the candidate for the magazine.

Here's what happened, according to Lubet and Drizin: "There was never a doubt as to how the candidate would respond. His father and grandfather both had been elected to high office, and he would follow their examples of honesty and probity. 'You know,' he said to the reporter, 'you are the first person who has ever asked me about that ... and this is the first time I have ever spoken of it to anyone.' Then he proceeded to explain all of the details in a quiet matter-of-fact way."

This kind of candor is, shall we say, uncommon on the campaign trail these days, given the current crop of carefully coached, always-on-message pols. But what happened next seems even more impossible by today's standards.

Glasgow didn't write about the shooting.

This might strike you as horrifying. Even if you think the shooting reveals nothing about Stevenson, you may recoil from the idea of a journalist keeping secrets instead of revealing them and letting readers judge their worth. (Conservatives might also argue that it was just another example of the liberal media covering for a Democratic candidate. If so, it didn't help Stevenson—he lost overwhelmingly to Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1952, then lost to him again in 1956.)

In those days, there were fewer news outlets and less competition for scoops. So reporters could exercise more discretion not just about which stories to do first, but which ones to write at all. Glasgow considered the tragedy in Stevenson's childhood and evidently decided it was more sensational than illuminating. So he didn't cover it.

If Stevenson were a candidate today, a contemporary Glasgow would almost certainly feel compelled to report the incident. That's a function in part of the proliferation of news outlets and the competition they bring. As my editorial-board colleague Carla Hall put it, "A reporter has to report something that dramatic almost defensively. If you don't print it, someone else will probably find it and print it." And if that happened, just imagine what Glasgow's editor would have said upon finding out that Glasgow had uncovered the skeleton in Stevenson's closet too, but had unilaterally decided not to run with it.

The pressure to report, and to report quickly, comes from readers as well as competitors. We at The Times took a heaping helping of grief for publishing—five days before a 2003 special election—six women's accusations that Republican gubernatorial candidate Arnold Schwarzenegger had groped them. The story came out so late in the campaign because it had spent a long time marinating in the editing process. But to many readers, it seemed like we'd sat on the story in order to spring it on Schwarzenegger at the end of the campaign and sink his candidacy. (He admitted to misbehaving on set, and won regardless.)

As a result, the incentives are lined up for journalists in favor of reporting whatever they find, biasing the system in favor of overdisclosing. Maybe that's a good thing in some respects, but to me it leads to too much unverified and irrelevant material being tossed into the public eye. Non-issues get elevated into issues; items of dubious veracity are presented with a disclaimer—hey, we can't tell you if this is true!—for the public to judge for itself. The best example of that would be the Steele dossier that BuzzFeed made public, something a number of more celebrated news organizations refused to do.

I kicked the Glasgow anecdote back and forth Monday with Carla, who was one of the reporters who broke the Gropinator story. The editorial board was grappling Monday with a laundry list of issues raised by Christine Blasey Ford's newly public accusation against President Trump's latest Supreme Court nominee, Brett Kavanaugh. Neither of us thinks for a moment that any reporter would have or should have treated Ford's allegations the way Glasgow handled Stevenson's childhood mishap.

But still, you have to wonder—both incidents raised questions about how to evaluate decades-old incidents and how much weight to put on the way a nominee defends himself. In 1952, a reporter might have felt he or she had enough authority and trust from readers to decide not to report allegations like Ford's without some concrete proof. He or she might have simply taken Kavanaugh at his word. Today? No way.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Add'l Green Gala sponsors

The Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance would like to give special recognition and thanks to Allstar Sporting Goods and Boarderline, whose names were inadvertently omitted from the full page "thank you" ad in Friday's edition, for their generous contribution to this year's Green Gala, and deeply regrets this oversight.

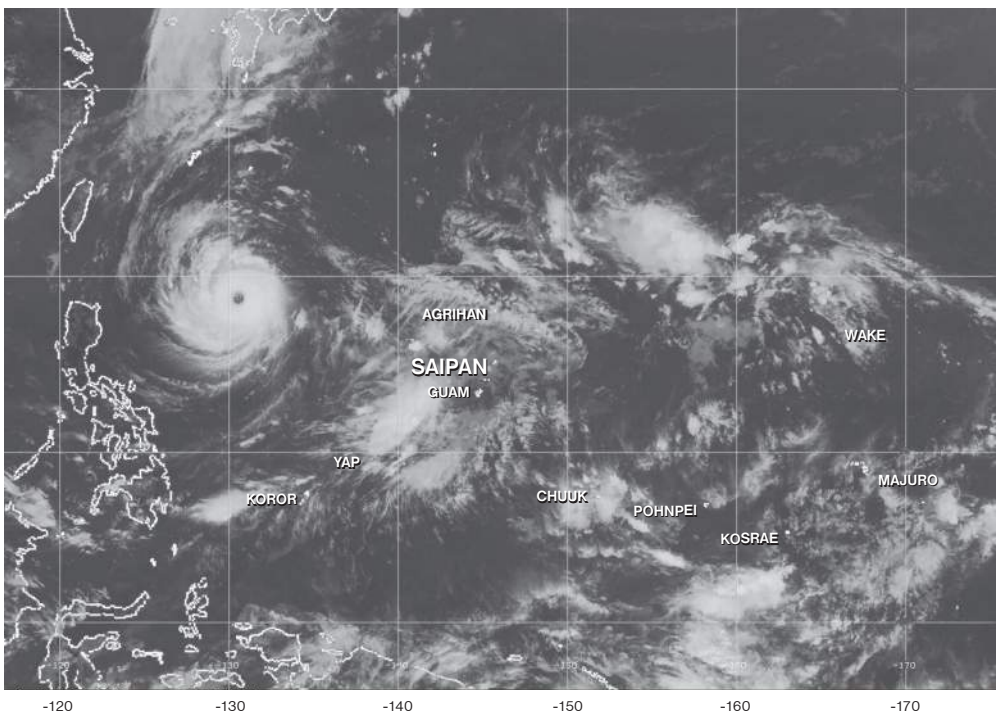
Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance
via email

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly sunny with isolated showers and thunderstorms. Southwest winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. Southwest winds 5 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼78°	▲86° ▼78°	▲86° ▼78°	▲87° ▼78°	▲87° ▼78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:30 AM, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2018
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

The Marianas are on the edge of a convective outbreak southwest of the islands that developed Sunday evening on the monsoon trough, but is now dissipating after delivering some light rain to Guam and Rota. Seas are 3 to 4 feet at the buoys, with gentle south winds.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 75°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 75°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 81°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Windy	57° / 52°
Beijing	Sunny	77° / 54°
Hong Kong	Showers	86° / 77°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	87° / 75°
London	Mostly Sunny	63° / 46°
Los Angeles	Sunny	78° / 63°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	88° / 79°
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	66° / 50°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	90° / 80°
New York	Thunderstorms	74° / 70°
Osaka	Showers	75° / 66°
Paris	Sunny	70° / 45°
Busan	Windy	72° / 64°
Rome	Partly Cloudy	75° / 52°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	88° / 71°
San Francisco	Sunny	69° / 53°
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	75° / 55°
Tokyo	Showers	72° / 63°
Washington, DC	Thunderstorms	81° / 72°

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- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
1:53 AM	LOW TIDE	0.59
7:30 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.86
2:03 PM	LOW TIDE	0.25
8:07 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.90

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:06 AM	6:11 PM
Wednesday	6:06 AM	6:10 PM
Thursday	6:06 AM	6:09 PM
Friday	6:06 AM	6:08 PM
Saturday	6:06 AM	6:08 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	5:57 AM	6:28 PM
Wednesday	-	6:47 AM	7:08 PM
Thursday	-	7:38 AM	7:49 PM
Friday	-	8:30 AM	8:32 PM
Saturday	-	9:24 AM	9:18 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 6, 2018

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	8:45am	9:30am	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA117	7:00am	7:45am	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:10am	6:10am	1, 7
7C3451	4:00am	7:05am	4, 5

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4
7C3452	9:05pm	2:10am+1	3, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

TW308	2:00am	6:05am	Daily
OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
LJ652	3:40am	7:30am	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403	4:45am	8:30am	Daily
7C3401	4:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	9:30am	3:00pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
TW307	7:45pm	1:00am+1	Daily
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
LJ651	9:10pm	2:40am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	5:40am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	12:00pm	1
JD396	4:50pm	10:00pm	4

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:25am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:55pm	5:00am+1	7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:25pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	10:55am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:55am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA6394/191	4:15am	9:00am	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	8:10am	7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6398/193	6:05pm	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/6395	12:40am	8:05am	3, 6 via GUM
UA190/6397	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:25pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:25pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/UA6395	10:05pm	8:05am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/6395	10:30pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via ROR-GUM
UA184/6395	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA6398/159	6:05pm	11:00pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/6395	11:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, LJ Jin Air, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

Get specific criteria from manager on performance review

YOUR OFFICE COACH

By MARIE G. MCINTYRE
McClatchy-Tribune News Service

Marie G. McIntyre is a workplace coach and the author of Secrets to Winning at Office Politics*. Send in questions and get free coaching tips at http://www.yourofficecoach.com, or follow her on Twitter @officecoach.*

Q: My last three performance reviews have been very disappointing. The manager who hired me always gave me outstanding ratings, but ever since he left, I have been rated as "meets expectations."

During this year's discussion, "Bob," my current supervisor, raved about how I had developed creative solutions, improved work processes and effectively trained new employees. However, he did not include these remarks in my written review. When I questioned my average rating, Bob said upper management would not agree to a higher score.

To make matters worse, my colleagues and I recently discovered that Bob gave us identical appraisals. All our ratings and comments were exactly the same. He apparently completed one review form and then made three copies with different names.

Fortunately, Bob is now transferring to another management position. When our new supervisor arrives, how can I get her to give me a better rating?

A: Being both cowardly and lazy, Bob provides a perfect example of how to mismanage the appraisal process. So before discussing your disappointment, let's focus for a moment on his dreadful approach to performance reviews.

Bob's first mistake was lavishing you with verbal praise which was omitted from the official document. Then, instead of providing helpful feedback, he blamed his bosses for your mediocre rating. Finally, he created four copycat review forms, which should probably be reported to human resources.

Regarding your ratings decline, there are several possibilities. Your hiring manager might have had different expectations than those who followed him. Your company could have decided to combat "ratings inflation" by limiting the number of high scores allowed. Or perhaps your performance has actually slipped a bit.

But regardless of the cause, the upcoming management change provides a perfect opportunity for a fresh start. Talk with your new boss about her definition of outstanding performance for your position, and then make a concerted effort to deliver those results.

Q: Our new coworker is a most unpleasant person. "Steve" is easily frustrated and prone to angry outbursts. He complains constantly and blames others when he makes mistakes. Steve also does very little work. He is usually chatting with friends or playing games on his phone. He even bragged about watching an entire movie at his desk.

Because Steve is still a probationary employee, he could easily be let go. However, our boss is located in a different area, so he may be unaware of these issues. How can we inform him without looking like a bunch of tattletales?

A: By allowing a probationary deadline to slip, many managers get stuck with problematic employees, so your group's feedback could be quite helpful. Just be sure to provide factual observations, not a litany of personal complaints.

For example: "We wanted to let you know that we have concerns about Steve. He spends a lot of time on non-work activities and frequently complains about his job. He also gets angry easily and avoids taking responsibility for his errors. Since he is still in his probationary period, we thought we should share this information."

Answer any questions your manager may have, thank him for listening, and then go on about your business. Regardless of what he ultimately decides, you will have provided a useful perspective.

Stop Brexit? UK's Labour party mulls backing new referendum

Brexit: is it worth it?
A PEOPLE'S VOTE FOR THE MANY
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PEOPLE'S VOTE FOR THE MANY

AP

Members of the public march in support of the People's Vote campaign in Liverpool, during the Labour Party's annual conference at the Arena and Convention Centre (ACC). Sunday Sept. 23, 2018.

LIVERPOOL, England (AP)—Britain's main opposition Labour Party confirmed Sunday it will hold a major debate on Brexit at its party conference this week, buoying Labour members hoping to stop the country from leaving the European Union.

With the U.K. and the European Union at an impasse in divorce talks, many Labour members think the left-of-center party has the power—and a duty—to force a new referendum that could reverse Britain's decision to leave the 28-nation bloc.

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn has long opposed that idea, but he and other party leaders are under pressure to change their minds. As delegates gathered in Liverpool, one message was emblazoned on hundreds of T-shirts and tote bags: "Love Corbyn, Hate Brexit."

Ever since Britain voted in 2016 to leave the EU, Labour has said it will respect the result, although it wants a closer relationship with the bloc than the one Prime Minister Theresa May's Conservative government is seeking.

Now, with divorce negotiations stuck and Britain due to leave in March, many Labour members think the party must change its course.

"Labour have to come to a decision. The time has gone for sitting on the fence," said Mike Buckley of Labour for a People's Vote, a group campaigning for a new Brexit referendum.

To drive home the message, several thousand People's Vote supporters marched through Liverpool on Sunday, waving blue-and-yellow EU flags alongside Union Jacks and holding signs reading "Exit from Brexit" and a few ruder slogans.

More than 100 local Labour associations submitted motions to the conference urging a public plebiscite, with a choice between leaving on terms agreed upon by the government or staying in the EU.

Party chiefs said Sunday that members and affiliated unions had selected Brexit as one of the priority issues delegates will consider, with a debate scheduled for Tuesday. But what exactly they will vote on has yet to be decided, and will be crucial.

Margaret Mills, a delegate from Orpington in southern England, said her local party had passed a motion calling on Labour to "stop Brexit by any means—well, short of physical violence."

"I think the time for vagueness is over," she said.

Corbyn—a veteran socialist who views the EU with suspicion—has long been against holding a second public vote on Brexit, although his opposition appears to be softening.

He said Sunday that he would prefer a general election rather than a referendum, but added: "Let's see what comes out of conference."

"Obviously I'm bound by the democracy of our party," Corbyn told the BBC.

Still, Labour faces a major political dilemma over Brexit. Most of the party's half a million members voted in 2016 to remain in the EU, but many of its 257 lawmakers represent areas that supported Brexit.

"For Labour to adopt a second referendum policy would spell political disaster in all those Labour seats that voted leave," said Brendan Chilton of the pro-Brexit group Labour Leave.

OPEC, allies agree not to further increase oil production

ALGIERS, Algeria (AP)—A meeting of OPEC and its allies ended without any decision to further increase oil output despite President Donald Trump's call for lower prices.

Members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries met on Sunday in Algiers with non-members including Russia.

The committee said in a statement that it was satisfied "regarding the current oil market outlook, with an overall healthy balance between supply and demand."

It also urged "countries with spare capacity to work with customers to meet their demand during the remaining month of 2018."

Trump has been calling publicly for OPEC to help lower prices by producing more.

"We protect the countries of the Middle East, they would not be safe for very long without us, and yet they continue to push for higher and higher oil prices!" he tweeted on Thursday.

The price rise is notably caused by a recent drop in Iran's supply because of U.S. sanctions.

OPEC and Russia have capped production since January 2017 to bolster prices. Output fell below those targets this year, and in June the same countries agreed to boost the oil supply.

Saudi Arabia Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih told reporters that participating countries have provided over the last three months "a lot of supply to offset decreases" in Iran, Venezuela and Mexico. "Markets are quite balanced today, there's plenty of supply to meet any customer that needs it."

Also Sunday, OPEC released its World Oil Outlook 2040 report.

The cartel says that China and India will drive growth in energy demand through 2040, and that oil will continue to remain the biggest source of energy despite a global push for cleaner resources. Oil demand is forecast to increase by 14.5 million barrels a day to a total of 111.7 million barrels in 2040, driven by an expanding middle class and economic growth in developing countries.

The U.S., which isn't an OPEC member and has in recent years seen a renewed boom in shale oil, will continue to grow as a crude producer, peaking in the late 2020s. That suggests OPEC's power to influence the market will be tempered by U.S. production for about another decade.

Nation

Florence the week after: Thousands brace for more flooding

BLADENBORO, N.C. (AP)—Thousands of coastal residents remained on edge Sunday, told they may need to leave their homes because rivers are still rising more than a week after Hurricane Florence slammed into the Carolinas.

About 6,000 to 8,000 people in Georgetown County, South Carolina, were alerted to be prepared to evacuate ahead of a "record event" of up to 10 feet (3 meters) of flooding expected from heavy rains dumped by Florence, county spokeswoman Jackie Broach-Akers said. She said flooding is expected to begin Tuesday near parts of the Pee Dee and Waccamaw rivers and that people in potential flood zones should plan to leave their homes Monday.

The county's emergency management director, Sam Hodge, said in a video message posted online that authorities are closely watching river gauges and law enforcement would be going door to door in any threatened areas.

"From boots on the ground to technology that we have, we are trying to be able to get the message out," Hodge said in the video feed, advising people they shouldn't await an official order to evacuate should they begin to feel unsafe.

In North Carolina, five river gauges were still at major flood stage and five others were at moderate flood stage, according to National Weather Service. The Cape Fear River was expected to crest and remain at flood stage through the early part of the week, and parts of Interstates 95 and 40 are expected to remain underwater for another week or more.

But floodwaters already receding on one stretch of Interstate 40 left thousands of rotting fish on the pavement for firefighters to clean up. Video showed firefighters blasting the dead fish off the highway with a fire hose in Pender County in eastern North Carolina. The local fire department posted online: "We can add 'washing fish off of the interstate' to the long list of interesting things firefighters get to experience."

North Carolina Emergency Management Director Michael Sprayberry said that eastern counties continue to see major flooding, including areas along the Black, Lumber, Neuse and Cape Fear rivers.

"Florence continues to bring misery to North Carolina," North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper said in a statement Sunday evening. He added that crews conducted about 350 rescues over the weekend and that travel remains treacherous in the southeastern area of his state. But he said National Guard members would be shifting next to more to door-to-door and air search wellness checks on people in still-flooded areas.

The storm has claimed at least 43 lives since slamming into the coast Sept. 14.

In Washington, Congress is starting to consider almost $1.7 billion in new money to aid recovery efforts from Florence. Lawmakers already are facing a deadline this week to fund the government before the start of the new budget year Oct. 1, and members of Congress are expected to try to act on the disaster relief along with separate legislation to fund the government.

AP

This Saturday, Sept. 22, 2018, photo provided by the North Carolina Department of Transportation shows fish left on Interstate 40 in Pender County in eastern North Carolina after floodwaters receded.

The chairman of the House Appropriations Committee said the money would be available as grants to states to help rebuild housing and public works, and assist businesses as they recover from the storm. GOP Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen of New Jersey called that "a first round" and that lawmakers are ready to act quickly if the federal disaster relief agency also needs more money.

An economic research firm estimated that Florence has caused around $44 billion in damage and lost output, which would make it one of the top 10 costliest U.S. hurricanes. The top disaster, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, cost $192.2 billion in today's dollars, while last year's Hurricane Harvey cost $133.5 billion Moody's Analytics estimates Florence has caused $40 billion in damage and $4 billion in lost economic output, though the company stressed that the estimate is preliminary.

In other developments, at least three wild horse herds survived Florence on North Carolina's Outer Banks, but caretakers were still trying to account for one herd living on a hard-hit barrier island, the News & Observer reported Sunday. Staff members are planning to make trips to the island this week to check on the Shackleford Banks herd.

Elsewhere in North Carolina, state environmental officials also said they're closely monitoring two sites where Florence's floodwaters have inundated coal ash sites.

What ignited many of California's worst wildfires a mystery

California officials quickly determined an arsonist started last month's huge wildfire southeast of Los Angeles, and that two weeks earlier sparks from a vehicle produced a deadly wildfire in the far northern part of the state.

But causes for many of California's worst blazes of the past decade remain a mystery.

The Associated Press reviewed state data on the 10 largest wildfires and 10 most destructive in terms of homes and buildings burned for each year dating to 2008. Lightning was the most common cause, accounting for about a quarter of those fires, followed by incidents involving power lines.

However, investigators could not determine a cause for about a third of those fires. Experts say each is a missed opportunity to learn something new.

"If we don't know what causes a fire, we don't know how to prevent them," said Carrie Bilbao, a spokeswoman for the National Interagency Fire Center who investigated wildfires in Idaho for 26 years.

It's estimated human activity—from untended campfires to sparks from vehicles—causes more than 80 percent of all wildfires in the United States, according to the National Interagency Fire Center.

So far in 2018, wildfires have scorched more than 2,000 square miles (5,180 square kilometers) in California. More than 2,000 homes and buildings have been destroyed, and at least 11 people killed.

The Mendocino Complex Fire that burned for nearly two months, killing one firefighter and destroying more than 150 homes, is the largest ever recorded in the state at 720 square miles (1,865 square kilometers), an area more than twice the size of New York City. No cause has been determined yet, nor has one been pinpointed for the Ferguson Fire, which prompted the closure of much of Yosemite National Park.

The Holy Fire, southeast of Los Angeles, was quickly determined to be arson. Authorities say the suspect was motivated by a feud with his neighbors in the Cleveland National Forest. The fire prompted evacuation orders for 20,000 people and nearly burned through the community of Lake Elsinore.

Arson was pegged as the cause for only five of California's most destructive or largest fires of the last decade, according to state records, though officials say the true number likely is much higher. That's because for arson to be the cause, no other possibility can exist.

So, for example, even if investigators believe an arsonist was responsible for a fire next to a rail line, they may leave the cause undetermined because they can't rule out a spark from a passing train.

Finding causes that can lead to preventive measures has become more urgent in drought-plagued California. Even as climate change extends the fire season and feeds record-breaking infernos, more homes are being built in rugged areas where fire danger is high.

Three times as much acreage has burned so far this year in California as last year, which produced the Tubbs Fire that was the most destructive in recorded state history and the Thomas Fire that, until this year, was the largest ever.

And the most dangerous months for California wildfires are still to come.

ACROSS THE NATION

3D gun advocate accused of sex with minor is jailed in US

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—The owner of a Texas company that sells plans to make untraceable 3-D printed guns was back in the U.S. Sunday after being arrested in Taiwan, where police say he flew after learning he was being investigated for allegedly having sex with an underage girl. The U.S. Marshals Service said 30-year-old Cody Wilson was booked into Harris County Jail in Houston early Sunday and was being held on $150,000 bond. It wasn't immediately clear if he had an attorney yet. He was arrested Friday at a hotel in Taiwan by local police. He is facing sexual assault charges in Austin, according to a statement from the U.S. Marshals service. Authorities say Wilson met the girl through the website SugardDaddyMeet.com. According to an affidavit, the girl said they met in the parking lot of an Austin coffee shop in August and then drove to a hotel. The girl told investigators that Wilson paid her $500 after they had sex and then dropped her off at a Whataburger restaurant.

Virginia school district's bid to arm teachers rejected

RICHMOND, Va. (AP)—A state agency has rejected an application from a rural Virginia school district that voted to arm teachers and other employees as protection against a school shooting. The Washington Post reports that the Department of Criminal Justice Services turned down Lee County Superintendent Brian Austin's application to register as an armed special conservator of the peace. The school district had hoped the designation would allow school employees to carry guns in schools. The department cited an advisory opinion from state Attorney General Mark Herring in deeming the plan unlawful. Austin said the district's working with its legal counsel to review its options. The school board voted in July to arm an unspecified number of teachers and staff members to carry concealed weapons or store guns in safes on school property.

Georgia jury awards $31M over boy's botched circumcision

JONESBORO, Ga. (AP)—A law firm says a Georgia jury has awarded $31 million to a boy for a botched circumcision he received as a newborn. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reports the award was handed down Friday in northern Georgia's Clayton County. A lawsuit filed by the boy's family says he was 18 days old in October 2013 when part of his penis was severed during a circumcision at Life Cycle Pediatrics in Riverdale. The family's attorney, Neal Pope, says nobody recommended emergency surgery to fix the problem. The lawsuit says the boy suffers pain and will have a lifetime of mental anguish. Attorney Terrell W. Benton represents the nurse midwife and physician who were found liable. Benton told jurors that $1 million should cover the boy's medical expenses and costs of long-term therapy.

Asia

Trump, at UN, to again confront N. Korea's nuclear threat

BRIDGEWATER, N.J. (AP)—As he begins the sequel to his stormy U.N. debut, President Donald Trump will again confront the dangers posed by North Korea's nuclear threat, though its shadow may appear somewhat less ominous than a year ago.

Twelve months after Trump stood at the rostrum of the U.N. General Assembly and derided North Korea's Kim Jong Un as "Rocket Man," the push to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula is a work in progress, although fears of war have given way to dreams of rapprochement. The president, whose bellicose denunciations of Pyongyang have largely given way to hopeful notes, plans to sit down with South Korean President Moon Jae-in, who comes bearing a personal message to Trump from North Korea's Kim after their inter-Korean talks last week.

Trump and Moon were expected to sign a new version of the U.S.-South Korean trade agreement, one of Trump's first successes in his effort to renegotiate trade deals on more favorable terms for the U.S. Even so, some U.S. officials worry that South Korea's eagerness to restore relations with the North could reduce sanctions pressure on Kim's government, hampering efforts to negotiate a nuclear accord.

The nuclear threat was on the agenda at Trump's first meeting, a dinner with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Manhattan on Sunday night. Abe stands first among world leaders in cultivating a close relationship with the president through displays of flattery that he has used to advance his efforts to influence the unpredictable American leader.

"We have our eyes wide open," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told NBC's "Meet the Press" on Sunday. "There is a long ways to go to get Chairman Kim to live up to the commitment that he made to President Trump and, indeed, to the demands of the world in the U.N. Security Council resolutions to get him to fully denuclearize."

AP
South Korean President Moon Jae-in and his wife Kim Jung-sook wave before leaving for the United States at the Seoul military airport in Seongnam, South Korea, Sunday, Sept. 23, 2018.

Redoubling his commitment to "America First" on the most global of stages, Trump will stress his dedication to the primacy of U.S. interests while competing with Western allies for an advantage on trade and shining a spotlight on the threat that he says Iran poses to the Middle East and beyond.

Scores of world leaders, even those representing America's closest friends, remain wary of Trump. In the 12 months since his last visit to the U.N., the president has jolted the global status quo by pulling out of the Iran nuclear deal, starting trade conflicts with China and the West and embracing Russia's Vladimir Putin even as the investigation into the U.S. president's ties to Moscow moves closer to the Oval Office.

Long critical of the United Nations, Trump delivered a warning shot ahead of his arrival by declaring that the world body had "not lived up to" its potential.

"It's always been surprising to me that more things aren't resolved," Trump said in a weekend video message, "because you have all of these countries getting together in one location but it doesn't seem to get there. I think it will."

If there is a through line to the still-evolving Trump doctrine on foreign policy, it is that the president will not subordinate American interests on the world stage, whether for economic, military or political gain.

Nikki Haley, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, told reporters in a preview of Trump's visit, that the president's focus "will be very much on the United States," its role and the relations it wants to build.

"He is looking forward to talking about foreign policy successes the United States has had over the past year and where we're going to go from here," she said. "He wants to talk about protecting U.S. sovereignty," while building relationships with nations that "share those values."

In his four-day visit to New York, Trump will deliver major speeches and meet with representatives of a world order that he has so often upended in the past year. On Monday he is also set to participate in a Global Call to Action on the World Drug Problem and then, in addition to Moon, meet with Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi and French President Emmanuel Macron.

Trump's address to the General Assembly comes Tuesday, and on Wednesday he will for the first time chair the Security Council, with the stated topic of non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. The subject initially was to have been Iran, but that could have allowed Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to attend, creating a potentially awkward situation for the U.S. leader.

Aides say the president will also use the session to discuss North Korea and other proliferation issues. While Trump is not seeking a meeting with Rouhani, he is open to talking with the Iranian leader if Rouhani requests one, administration officials said.

In meetings with European leaders as well as during the Security Council session, Trump plans to try to make the case that global companies are cutting ties with Iran ahead of the reimposition in five weeks of tough sanctions against Tehran. The penalties are a result of Trump's decision to withdraw the U.S. from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

Trump at the time cited Iran's role as a malign force in the region, particularly its support of terrorist groups, but also its involvement in Syria. U.S. officials say their priority for the region now is removing Iranian forces from Syria.

Trump is also expected to deliver a fresh warning to Syria's Bashar al-Assad that the use of chemical weapons against civilians in the major rebel stronghold of Idlib would have serious repercussions. Britain and France are actively planning a military response should Assad use chemical weapons again, according to U.S. officials.

In a first, Hong Kong bans pro-independence political party

HONG KONG (AP) — Authorities in Hong Kong on Monday took an unprecedented step against separatist voices by banning a political party that advocates independence for the southern Chinese territory on national security grounds.

John Lee, the territory's secretary for security, announced that the Hong Kong National Party will be prohibited from operation from Monday.

Lee's announcement did not provide further details. But Hong Kong's security bureau had previously said in a letter to the National Party's leader, 27-year-old Andy Chan, that the party should be dissolved "in the interests of national security or public safety, public order or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others." Chan had no immediate comment.

That letter had cited a national security law that has not been invoked since 1997. The ban is likely to raise further questions about Beijing's growing influence in the former British colony, which was promised semi-autonomy as part of the 1997 handover. Chinese President Xi Jinping and other officials have warned separatist activity would not be tolerated.

The perception that Beijing is reneging on its promise of semi-autonomy and eroding Hong Kong's free elections and freedom of speech is helping fuel a rising generation of young activists calling for greater autonomy, if not outright independence.

Huge pro-democracy protests erupted in 2014 in response to the decision by China's ruling Communist Party to retain the right to effectively pre-screen candidates for Hong Kong's leadership.

Chan, the National Party leader, had told The Associated Press in July that police approached him with documents detailing his speeches and activities since the party's formation in 2016.

The party was founded in response to frustration about Beijing's treatment of Hong Kong. Despite a promise of autonomy, activists complain mainland influence over its democratic elections is increasing.

Chan and other pro-independence candidates were disqualified from 2016 elections to the Hong Kong legislature after they refused to sign a pledge saying Hong Kong is an inalienable part of China. The Hong Kong National Party has never held any seats on the council.

Vietnam to hold state funeral for President Tran Dai Quang

HANOI, Vietnam (AP)—Vietnam will hold a state funeral and national mourning this week for President Tran Dai Quang, who died last week of a viral illness at age 61.

Flags will fly at half-staff and entertainment activities will be canceled during the two-day funeral that starts Wednesday, the Communist Party and government announced.

Quang will be buried in his home village in northern Ninh Binh province, some 115 kilometers (72 miles) south of Hanoi on Thursday.

His passing is a "great loss to our Party, state and people," the announcement said.

He died at a Hanoi hospital on Friday. State media quoted a government doctor as saying he died due to a rare virus but the reports did not identify it.

World leaders have sent condolences.

President Donald Trump, with whom Quang hosted his first state visit to the communist country last year, called Quang a "great friend of the United States" while Chinese President Xi Jinping said Quang was "close comrade and friend of the Chinese people."

A career security officer, Quang rose through the ranks to be minister of public security in 2011 and was elected by the National Assembly as the nation's president in April 2016.

Vice President Dang Thi Ngoc Thinh has been named acting president. No date has been given for the election of a new president.

The country's other top leaders are Party General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong, Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc and chairwoman of the National Assembly Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan. Analysts say Quang's death is unlikely to shake up the Communist country's politics which are led collectively.

World

Iran's president blames US after attack on military parade

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Iran's president on Sunday accused an unnamed U.S.-allied country in the Persian Gulf of being behind a terror attack on a military parade that killed 25 people and wounded 60, further raising regional tensions.

Hassan Rouhani's comments came as Iran's Foreign Ministry also summoned Western diplomats over them allegedly providing havens for the Arab separatists who claimed Saturday's attacks in the southwestern city of Ahvaz.

The Iranian moves, as well as promises of revenge by Iran's elite Revolutionary Guard, come as the country already faces turmoil in the wake of the American withdraw from Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers. The attack in Ahvaz, which saw women and children flee with uniformed soldiers bloodied, has further shaken the country.

Rouhani's remarks could refer to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates or Bahrain—close U.S. military allies that view Iran as a regional menace over its support for militant groups across the Middle East.

"All of those small mercenary countries that we see in this region are backed by America. It is Americans who instigate them and provide them with necessary means to commit these crimes," Rouhani said before leaving for the U.N. General Assembly in New York.

Iran meanwhile summoned diplomats from Britain, Denmark and the Netherlands early Sunday for allegedly harboring "members of the terrorist group" that launched the attack. Danish Foreign Minister Anders Samuelsen condemned the attack and stressed that there would be "consequences" if it turns out that those responsible have connections to Denmark.

The ministry later summoned the UAE's envoy as well over what it called the "irresponsible and insulting statements" of an Emirati adviser, according to the semi-official ISNA news agency. The UAE did not immediately acknowledge the summons.

Saturday's attack, in which militants disguised as soldiers opened fire on an annual Iranian military parade in Ahvaz, was the deadliest attack in the country in nearly a decade. Women and children scattered along with once-marching Revolutionary Guard soldiers as heavy gunfire rang out, the chaos captured live on state television.

The region's Arab separatists, once only known for nighttime attacks on unguarded oil pipelines, claimed responsibility for the assault, and Iranian officials appeared to believe the claim. The separatists accuse Iran's Persian-dominated government of discriminating against its ethnic Arab minority. Khuzestan province also has seen recent protests over Iran's nationwide drought, as well as economic protests.

The attack killed at least 25 people and wounded 60, according to the state-run IRNA news agency. It said gunmen wore military uniforms and targeted a riser where military and police commanders were sitting. State TV hours later reported that all four gunmen had been killed.

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani speaks at a military parade marking the 38th anniversary of Iraq's 1980 invasion of Iran, in front of the shrine of the late revolutionary founder, Ayatollah Khomeini, outside Tehran, Iran, Saturday, Sept. 22, 2018. AP

At least eight of the dead served in the Revolutionary Guard, an elite paramilitary unit that answers only to Iran's supreme leader, according to the semi-official Tasnim news agency. The Guard responded to the attack on Sunday, warning it would seek "deadly and unforgiving revenge in the near future."

Tensions have been on the rise in Iran since the Trump administration pulled out of the 2015 nuclear accord with Iran in May and began restoring sanctions that were eased under the deal. It also has steadily ramped up pressure on Iran to try to get it to stop what Washington calls its "malign activities" in the region.

The U.S. government nevertheless strongly condemned Saturday's attack and expressed its sympathy, saying it "condemns all acts of terrorism and the loss of any innocent lives."

The Islamic State group also claimed responsibility for the attack in a message on its Amaaq news agency, but provided no evidence it carried out the assault. They also initially wrongly said the Ahvaz attack targeted Rouhani, who was in Tehran. The militants have made a string of false claims in the wake of major defeats in Iraq and Syria.

On Sunday, IS militants posted a video online of three men, two of whom who spoke in Arabic extolling the benefits of martyrdom. A third who spoke in Farsi said they wanted to attack the Guard. The video included no time stamps, nor any specific references to the Ahvaz attack.

The attack dominated Iranian newspaper front pages on Sunday. The hard-line daily Kayhan warned that Iranians would demand Saudi Arabia feel the "hard slap" of the country's power.

Iran's government declared Monday as a nationwide public mourning day, state-run IRNA news agency reported Sunday.

Also all governmental organizations, banks, schools and universities in southeastern Khuzestan province will be closed on Monday, semi-official Tasnim news agency reported.

An overnight impromptu candle-light vigil in Ahvaz honored the dead and wounded. Among the dead is 4-year-old Mohammad Taha, who was captured by a photographer being carried away from the attack by a Guardsman in full dress uniform and sash. The photograph, showing the boy bloodied and helpless, shocked Iran.

A doctor interviewed on state television said Mohammad had been up the night before marking Ashoura, a commemoration of the death of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson Hussein, one of Shiite Islam's most beloved saints. Mourners wear black in honor of his 7th century death in the Battle of Karbala in present-day Iraq.

"He was wearing a black shirt when he was martyred," a doctor said, standing next to the boy's tiny corpse, now wrapped in a blue body bag.

German government reaches deal to solve spy chief dispute

BERLIN (AP)—Leaders of German Chancellor Angela Merkel's governing coalition reached a deal Sunday to resolve a standoff over the future of the country's domestic intelligence chief, a dispute that has further dented the image of their fractious six-month-old alliance.

The center-left Social Democrats have insisted that Hans-Georg Maassen be removed as head of the BfV spy agency for appearing to downplay recent violence against migrants, but conservative Interior Minister Horst Seehofer has stood by him.

Last week, coalition leaders agreed to replace Maassen as head of the BfV but give him a new job as a deputy interior minister, a promotion with a hefty pay increase. The move prompted a backlash from furious Social Democrats, prompting party leader Andrea Nahles to call for the deal's renegotiation.

On Sunday, coalition leaders agreed instead to make Maassen a "special adviser" at the interior ministry with responsibility for "European and international issues," Seehofer said. He will remain at his current pay level.

In addition, a deputy interior minister and expert on construction issues, Social Democrat Gunther Adler, will now keep his job rather than making way for Maassen. Nahles will have to sell the new compromise to her party's leadership on Monday.

"I think it is a very good signal that we took the criticism of our decision on Tuesday evening seriously and were able to correct it," Nahles told reporters. She declared that "overall, the foundation has been laid for us to return to substantive work."

A left-leaning Social Democrat deputy leader, Ralf Stegner, described it as "a good solution."

The dispute has clouded the government's future at a time when the three parties face major challenges in upcoming state elections, in Seehofer's home state of Bavaria on Oct. 14 and in neighboring Hesse on Oct. 28.

The infighting appears to be weighing down their support, which hasn't recovered since a national election a year ago in which all three coalition parties lost ground and the far-right Alternative for Germany entered parliament.

The coalition of Merkel's Christian Democratic Union, Seehofer's Bavaria-only Christian Social Union and the Social Democrats took office in March after Nahles' party decided reluctantly to join up.

It has already been through one crisis that threatened its survival, when Merkel and Seehofer—a conservative ally, but a longtime critic of her initially welcoming approach to refugees in 2015—faced off in June over whether to turn back some migrants at the German-Austrian border.

WORLD BRIEFS

Burials begin as deaths from capsized ferry rise to 224

UKARA ISLAND, Tanzania (AP)—Relatives wept in grief on Sunday at the mass burial in Tanzania of many of the 224 people who drowned when a ferry in capsized on Lake Victoria. Colorfully painted coffins were lined up to go into graves on Ukara Island. Grieving family members places wreaths of flowers on the coffins. The overloaded boat tipped over Thursday as it got to about 50 meters (55 yards) from the island's dock. People carrying their goods from a busy market day prepared to disembark, unbalancing the ferry which turned over. Horrified fishermen and others watched from the shore. One survivor said he is still searching for his daughter. "My child might have been found, but I have not seen her," said Magesa Chibuga, in Swahili. "I am therefore waiting for this ferry to be lifted from the water so that I can see whether she is there or not. But I am feeling very bad. I thank God I have found my wife, but the child is still missing. So God has every plan."

Man arrested at Buckingham Palace with stun gun

LONDON (AP)—London police say a man has been arrested at the visitors' entrance to Buckingham Palace carrying a firearm. Police said Sunday a 38-year-old was arrested on suspicion of carrying a stun gun. He is being questioned at a London police station. The man hasn't been identified or charged. The suspect was detained by Buckingham Palace security staff and handed over to police. A limited part of the palace is open to public tours.

Macedonia's president says he won't vote in referendum

SKOPJE, Macedonia (AP)—Macedonia's president says he won't vote in a Sept. 30 referendum on whether to change the Balkan country's name to "North Macedonia." Macedonians will vote next weekend on a proposal to change the country's name, ending a long-running dispute with neighboring Greece, which sees the use of the term "Macedonia " as a claim on its own province of the same name. President Gjorge Ivanov was speaking to members of the Macedonian diaspora in Detroit on Saturday. He reiterated his position that the deal with Greece is "harmful and defeating" for Macedonia, according to a statement released by his office Sunday. Polls indicate Macedonians will likely back the deal, but it remains unclear whether turnout will meet the required 50-percent threshold for the vote to be valid.

Focus

As Venezuelans go hungry, Trump targets food corruption

By JOSHUA GOODMAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

In this July 6, 2018 photo, employees of a government-supported cultural center receive boxes with subsided food distributed under a government program named "CLAP" in downtown Caracas, Venezuela. Some workers transfer the contents, cooking oil, flour, rice, canned tuna, to suitcases or backpacks for fear of becoming walking targets. AP

The June meeting was conducted behind closed doors far from the klieg-light attention normally focused on Venezuela.

Around a U-shaped table in a hotel towering above the Panama Canal, U.S. Treasury Department officials distributed a list of suspected shell companies that they believe senior Venezuelan officials have used across the globe to siphon off millions of dollars from food import contracts amid widespread starvation in the oil-rich nation.

The two-day meeting, and several others that have taken place since April, are part of a sustained campaign by the Trump administration to pressure President Nicolas Maduro by striking at the wallets of the top officials in his socialist administration.

"They know we're after them, and they know we're after them on a multinational basis because we're beginning to see the networks morph and new shell companies stand up and existing ones wound down," Marshall Billingslea, the assistant Treasury secretary for terrorist financing, said in an interview on the sidelines of the meeting.

At that gathering, financial forensic investigators from the U.S. and three conservative Latin American allies—Mexico, Panama and Colombia—traced transactions by companies believed to be controlled by a government-connected businessman, according to several participants who spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because the deliberations were private.

Since Donald Trump became president, dozens of senior Venezuelan officials, including Maduro himself, have been sanctioned by the Treasury Department over allegations of corruption, human rights abuses and drug trafficking.

Last year, Trump even threatened a "military option" to remove Maduro and, with senior aides and Latin American leaders, raised the possibility of invading the South American country. As the country's economic troubles mount, he has sought to rally regional pressure as well.

The focus on food is deliberate, said Billingslea, a key driver of U.S. policy toward Venezuela who led Trump's national security transition team.

A story published by the AP in 2016 revealed how senior Venezuelan officials and members of the military were enriching themselves by diverting money from food contracts. Since then, as hunger has spread, Maduro has moved to assert even greater control over food distribution, handing out monthly boxes of staples that critics label a form of dictatorial social control.

Maduro said he began distributing the so-called CLAP boxes—a Spanish acronym for Local Committees for Supply and Production—as a way to circumvent the "economic war" being waged by the U.S. and opponents seeking to oust him from power.

As Venezuela has fallen deeper into political and economic turmoil, the CLAP program has become a tenuous lifeline for millions of citizens suffering due to barren supermarket shelves and hyperinflation estimated by the International Monetary Fund to soon reach 1 million percent.

Critics say Maduro has essentially weaponized food, distributing the boxes primarily to government workers and supporters. According to an April survey by the local pollster Datanalisis, more than 60 percent of Venezuelan households said they received CLAP box in the previous three months—about the same percentage that helped re-elect the embattled leader in May presidential elections boycotted by the opposition.

The allegations are fueling calls from Latin American leaders, including the heads of Argentina, Colombia and Chile, for Maduro to be tried in an international court for crimes against humanity.

"This goes beyond just corruption," said Billingslea, who led the U.S. delegation to Panama with Kenneth Blanco, the director of the Treasury Department's financial crimes enforcement network. "This is literally looting the one social safety-net program left in Venezuela."

On a recent weeknight, word quickly spread among employees of a government-supported cultural center about the downtown Caracas location where they could collect their monthly CLAP ration. Within a few hours, everyone from museum curators to janitors waited in line to sign a clipboard before government loyalists slid a box across the table.

Once outside, some workers tore open the boxes, transferring the contents—cooking oil, flour, rice, canned tuna—to backpacks for fear of becoming walking targets in one of Latin America's most violent cities. Some said they planned to resell the food on the black market, where a single bag of sugar can easily fetch more than 100 times the heavily subsidized price of the entire CLAP box.

"When the food boxes first came out, we used to get a kilogram of meat or chicken, but we never saw that again," said Marcos Inojosa, an electrical technician who has been receiving the handout for about a year. "The president turns a blind eye and pretends that everything is working well. But everything is in the dumps."

Among those under scrutiny by the coalition of countries is an obscure Colombian businessman who struck gold selling to Maduro's government.

Alex Saab, from the Caribbean city of Barranquilla, was a major focus of the closed-door meetings in Panama City, the participants who spoke on condition of anonymity told the AP. At one point they even studied the movements of a U.S.-registered private jet to identify his current whereabouts: Caracas, Paris, or Lebanon.

Saab gained some prominence in 2011 after signing an agreement to build social housing for the Venezuelan government on behalf of a Colombia-based construction company. He appeared on Venezuelan state television alongside Maduro, the late President Hugo Chavez and then-Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos.

Investigators say Saab entered the food business through a Hong Kong-based company, Group Grand Ltd., which they say bears the hallmarks of a shell company, including no known track record in the food business, a rudimentary webpage that is now inaccessible and an address in Caracas shared with Saab's construction company.

Group Grand has been awarded contracts to provide at least 11.5 million CLAP boxes, according to a Venezuelan Food Ministry spreadsheet obtained by the AP.

Luisa Ortega, who was ousted as Venezuela's chief prosecutor and exiled last year after breaking with Maduro, has called for an investigation into Saab, alleging—so far without evidence—that he and Group Grand are fronts for Maduro

Billingslea would not discuss specific individuals or entities on the task force's radar, but said going after what he believes is money stolen from food imports by Maduro and first lady Cilia Flores is a top priority.

Prosecutors in both Miami and Colombia have been investigating Saab for more than a year, four U.S. and Colombian officials with knowledge of those investigations told the AP. All spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitive political nature of the ongoing probe.

Saab's Miami-based lawyer, Richard Diaz, rejected allegations of any wrongdoing, saying that Saab has been subjected to undue scrutiny and harsh media coverage because of false testimony leveled against him. He said that if the U.S. had cause to believe the allegations were possibly true, his client would have been charged long ago.

Saab said in a statement that he is being targeted by government opponents looking to sabotage the economy.

"Instead, they should be thankful that despite so much bad press and international blockade there are still businessmen willing to invest and believe in the country," he said.

The U.S. Treasury estimates that at least 70 percent of the CLAP program is being gutted by corruption, citing evidence of overbilling.

Among the transactions that have raised red flags is a September 2017 invoice presented to Venezuela's food ministry by Group Grand for $41 million worth of powdered milk at a price of $6,950 per metric ton, or more than double the market price at the time. A copy of the invoice was provided to the AP.

"Never have we seen prices that high, not even in times of crisis," said Roger Figueroa, president of the Venezuelan dairy industry's lobby group.

A study conducted by Figueroa's group also found that the powdered milk distributed in the CLAP boxes regularly contained a third of government-mandated protein levels and twice the level of recommended carbohydrates.

The investigative cooperation between the U.S. and other countries began about a year ago at the urging of Trump officials, and already has yielded some results.

On May 17, three days before Maduro was re-elected, then-Colombian President Santos, acting on information provided by the U.S., announced the seizure of 15 shipping containers filled with more than 25,000 CLAP boxes stamped with Chavez's image and containing beetle-infested rice and other spoiled food.

In testimony to police obtained by the AP, the owner of a Colombian company said he was hired by another firm to assemble and ship the boxes to Venezuela's Corporation of Foreign Trade, or Corpovex, which had for years been under the stewardship of an air force general.

A U.S. Treasury advisory last year warned American banks about the risks of doing business with Venezuelan clients, citing Corpovex as a vehicle frequently used by corrupt officials for embezzling state funds through shell companies.

The seized CLAP shipment, which was valued at over $500,000, was never sent. It spoiled sitting on the docks because the firm that ordered it, a Portuguese company called Agrovarius, said its bank accounts had been frozen and it could not pay its bills, according to the police testimony.

Little is known about Agrovarius, which is located behind a high white wall in a Lisbon suburb. One of the company's listed owners, Joao Rosa, denied having anything to do with the Colombian shipment and insisted all the company's vendors had been paid.

Agrovarius also was implicated in what has come to be called the so-called pork revolution, which took place last Christmas when angry Venezuelans took to the streets when Maduro failed to deliver on a promise to provide thousands of free hams to poor neighborhoods.

Maduro accused Portugal's government of "sabotaging" the holiday gift, but the long-established Portuguese meatpacker Raporal pinned the blame on Agrovarius, saying it was never paid the more than 6 million euros needed to supply Venezuela's government with the meat.

A spokesman for Raporal said the company is now suing Agrovarius for breach of contract. Rosa said Agrovarius had nothing to do with the botched Christmas ham shipment.

Billingslea, meanwhile, said that Maduro has repeatedly sought to deflect blame for his own mismanagement and refusal to address mounting hunger.

"If they really wanted to feed people, they'd let in the foreign aid that's been offered," he said.

Overdrive

AUTO REVIEW: The sublime Mazda6 is so good, you'll call it by another name

TNS
The Mazda6 remains an excellent choice for those who love to drive.

By LARRY PRINTZ
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

In an era where some midsize sedans have styling that call to mind kabuki masks, while others are disappearing altogether, the Mazda6 remains the choice of those who love to drive, and who find the thought of autonomous cars nauseating. After all, when a car is as enjoyable to drive as the Mazda6, why would you leave driving to a computer?

Artfully rendered and skillfully engineered, the Mazda6 maintains its attractive allure this year, receiving new standard LED lighting, revised interior materials a new front grille design, revised wheels and a cabin makeover.

What's unchanged is this car's incredible good looks, with a naturally flowing beltline and rakish greenhouse. The new grille adds an additional dash of sportiness, and is framed by an elegant accent of chrome trim. It looks racy, and it has the goods to back up its exquisite appearance.

Credit the new turbocharged 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine, which is the same engine found in the Mazda CX-9 crossover. Rated at 250 horsepower and 310 pound-feet of torque, it mates to a six-speed automatic transmission. A six-speed manual transmission is available, but comes only with the naturally-aspirated version of the same engine that produces 187 horsepower and 186 pound-feet of torque.

Step on the throttle and you'll find generous amounts of power, although initial acceleration could be a little stronger. The transmission shifts smoothly, unobtrusively firing off the shifts that keep this car cooking. Handling is quite good for a front driver, with little body lean and no torque steer. There's a selectable Sport mode, but since it only changes the transmission's shift points, its usefulness is trivial. Besides, the standard tuning works extremely well; this thing is a hoot to drive. The retuned chassis and suspension provide a ride that's firm and fairly absorbent, although the largest bumps crash through uncomfortably. The cabin is fairly quiet, with only the worst road surfaces producing too much racket.

Inside, Mazda fully redesigned the seats to better absorb vibrations. Better yet, they can be equipped with seat heaters and ventilation up front, and heated seats in the rear. The cabin is spacious, with generous front seat legroom and a decent amount in the rear. Of course, if there's not enough space, there's always the generously sized trunk.

The instrument panel is new as well, designed in a sleek minimalistic idiom that seems above its station. Opt for the top trim level and you'll be treated to wood, suede and leather accents, which merely gilds the lily, transforming this sublime ride into one that's affordably premium.

Available in ascending Sport, Touring, Grand Touring, Grand Touring Reserve, and Signature trim levels, the Mazda6 benefits from a large 8-inch touchscreen that houses Mazda Connect, the brand's infotainment system. Its intuitive interface makes it easy to use, and pairing a mobile phone is easy and quick. Apple CarPlay and Android Auto are now available.

Like many new rides, the Mazda6 comes with an impressive number of driving assistance aids, including blind-spot monitoring, lane-keeping assist and adaptive cruise control are standard on all but Sport models, where they're part of an optional $625 package.

There are newer competitors in the midsize sedan segment, but few offer the sophisticated mix of adept handling, ample power, reasonable fuel economy and the latest in tech all wrapped in a beguilingly beautiful package.

It's so good, you'll want to call the Mazda6 the Mazda Sex.

NUTS & BOLTS

- Base prices: $21,950-$
- Engine: Turbocharged 2.5-liter four-cylinder
- Horsepower: 250
- Torque: xx pound-feet
- EPA fuel economy (city/highway): 23/31
- Wheelbase: 111.4 inches
- Length: 191.5 inches
- Cargo capacity: 14.7 cubic feet
- Curb weight: 3,560 pounds
- IIHS rating: xx

Under the Hood: Clicking a telltale sign of CV grease boot failure

Q: My son's well-used Corolla is making a clicking noise when he makes a U-turn, more so on sharp left turns. Any idea why? I looked underneath to see if something was loose and there is a lot of grease just behind the left front wheel. Could this be related?

— Eric S.

A: Eric, its sounds like the Corolla's outer CV (constant velocity) grease boot has failed, and the flexible drive joint within has worn excessively. Let's take a look at how these parts work, then plan a course of action.

Front wheel drive vehicles use two CV joints on each drive axle, inner and outer. These are more sophisticated than the simple u-joints used on a rear wheel drive vehicle's drive shaft. The inner CV joint provides plunging capability plus some angular change. This allows the axle to change length and angle as the suspension compresses and extends, relative to the transaxle. The outer CV joint allows significant angular changes so the wheels can turn sharp in addition to suspension movement. Both CV joints are sealed within flexible rubber boots and contain grease to lubricate the close-tolerance needle bearings or balls and races.

Over time the bellows-like rubber boots, particularly the outer, flex one time too many and develop splits or tears. Grease slings out, and dirt and water enter, greatly accelerating CV joint wear. A worn inner CV joint often makes a clunking noise during starts and stops, and a faulty outer joint can make a noise like you've described during turns. If the noise has just recently surfaced, the car is likely safe to drive in this condition, but as the joint wears further, vibration will occur and will likely become unbearable. Catching a boot failure early (it's wise to inspect them at each oil change) and renewing the boot promptly can prevent joint damage. Renewing boots requires axle removal, and unless the failure just occurred during dry weather, the joint should be fully disassembled, cleaned, inspected and re-greased. I'm not much of a fan of glue-together split-boots, other than as a temporary measure. They're a time saver, but not removing the shaft and servicing the joint will work against you long term.

Thanks to the proliferation of inexpensive remanufactured and/or new parts, it's usually more cost effective and quicker to renew the entire drive axle rather than replace the worn joint and boot, and in some cases even just a boot. Replacing the axle typically requires separation of the lower ball joint or strut and removal of the big nut in the center of the wheel hub. Disconnection of the sway bar and outer steering tie rod may also be necessary. The hub and brake assembly can then be tilted outward enough to sneak the old axle out and new one in. It's important to note the manufacturer's recommendations on nut replacement and tightening torque, and the procedure needed to disengage the shaft from the transaxle.

■■■

Tip: Keep an eye out for drips of green, orange or red fluid beneath your vehicle's engine where it is parked. Much more serious than an errant drop or two of oil, coolant loss will certainly worsen, and if not rectified, will result in overheating. Severe overheating can cause serious distortion and damage to the engine.

By BRAD BERGHOLDT
Tribune News Service

Brad Bergholdt is an automotive technology instructor at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. Readers may send him email at bradbergholdt@gmail.com; he cannot make personal replies.

Life & Style

Will Smith bungee jump is latest stunt near Grand Canyon

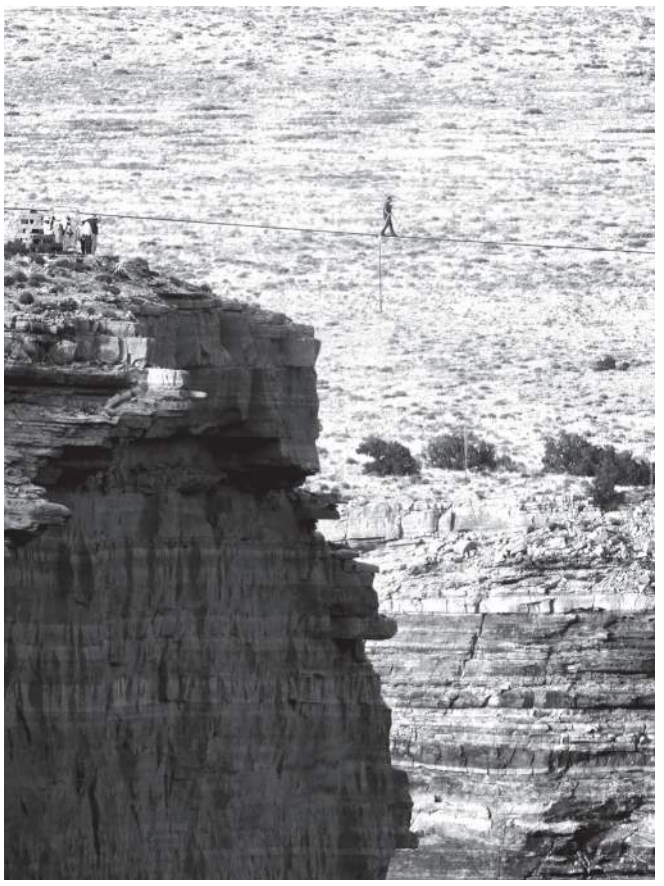
FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP)—At the end of the 1991 movie "Thelma & Louise," the two leading ladies—fugitives cornered by authorities in the Grand Canyon—decide against surrendering and instead drive off a cliff.

One of cinema's most iconic endings wasn't filmed in the national park in Arizona, but not for lack of trying.

"We didn't want to encourage people coming into the canyon doing what was done in the movie, so we declined it," said Maureen Oltrogge, a longtime spokeswoman for the national park who retired in 2014.

Nevertheless, Oltrogge said at least two people took their own lives by driving over the rim of the Grand Canyon after the movie was released, thinking it was filmed there.

The landscape in and around one of the world's seven natural wonders has a long history of stunts being staged—or turned down. An acrobat, a magician and overall daredevils are among those who have approached Grand Canyon National Park over the years with visions of a made-for-TV moment.



In this June 23, 2013, file photo, daredevil Nik Wallenda crosses a tightrope 1,500 feet above the Little Colorado River Gorge, Ariz., on the Navajo Nation outside the boundaries of Grand Canyon National Park. AP

The latest planned feat will be Tuesday when actor Will Smith celebrates his 50th birthday by bungee jumping from a helicopter.

Actor James Woods bashes Twitter after getting locked out

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Actor James Woods has been locked out of his Twitter account over a tweet he sent out months ago that was found to be in violation of Twitter's rules.

The tweet was posted July 20 and includes a hoax meme that said it came from Democrats and encouraged men not to vote in the midterm elections. Woods got an email from Twitter on Thursday saying the tweet "has the potential to be misleading in a way that could impact an election." The email says Woods can use his account again if he deletes the tweet.

In an exclusive interview with The Associated Press on Sunday, Woods said this means he'll be allowed back on Twitter only if he decides to do what Twitter says. He says he won't do that, and he won't delete the tweet.

"Free speech is free speech—it's not Jack Dorsey's version of free speech," Woods said, referring to Twitter Chief Executive Jack Dorsey.

Twitter said it doesn't comment on individual accounts for privacy and security reasons. A spokesman for the social media platform said by email that he had nothing more to share when asked if Dorsey would respond directly to Wood's comments.

"The irony is, Twitter accused me of affecting the political process, when in fact, their banning of me is the truly egregious interference," Woods said. "Because now, having your voice smothered is much more disturbing than having your vocal chords slit. If you want to kill my free speech, man up and slit my throat with a knife, don't smother me with a pillow."

Woods said if he deletes the tweet, it would force him to watch his step with everything he says in the future, chilling free speech.

The Family of the late

†William Santos Salas

would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to our relatives, friends and our Techa Auntie Winn Taitano for all their prayers, words of comfort, and support throughout our time of sorrow. Although we mourn the passing of our beloved †Bill we also rejoice to the end of his sufferings and the beginning of his new life in paradise.

Let us continue to pray for each other for love, hope, and peace.

From our hearts, thank you, un dankulo na si yu'us ma'ase yan ghilisow, for all your love, prayers and kindness.

Yvonne Dlg. Salas, Children and Family

In Loving Memory of

Catalina Tudela Muna Borja

also known as Nan Ninang / Mom

Born March 2, 1930 in Garapan Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands,
died September 23, 2018 in Houston, Texas.

In her new life, she joins her:

Husband: Gregorio Flores Borja (Goro Palau); and **Infant son:** Gregorio Muna Borja
Parents: Sebastian Palacios and Rosa Sablan Tudela Muna; **and grandparents:** Nicolas Pangelinan and Maria dela Cruz Palacios Muna; and Francisco Ramirez and Ana del Rosario Sablan Tudela
Parents-in-law: Juan de Leon Guerrero and Rosa Aguon Flores Borja; and
Great grandparents-in-law: Simon Duenas de Borja and Nicolasa Pangelinan de Leon Guerrero; and Jose Taitano Flores and Josefa Quintanilla Aguon
Brothers and sisters: Isabel (Ignacio Celis), Juana (Jose Camacho), Carmen, Paulino, Alvina, Esteban (Maria), Lorenzo Guerrero (Isabel), Daniel, and Miguel.

Her loving memories will forever be cherished in the hearts of her loving children and families:

Children and families:

David and Karen Borja, *grandson: Gregory Pat and Mel Borja with great grandchildren Melissa Maeteny, David John and Garrett Payton; granddaughter Anie Borja and Pete Vogl with great grandchildren Nathan (Keaton), Michael, Ashely, and Olivia; granddaughter Christina and Michel Thorsgaard with great grandchildren Noah, Emily and James; and grandson Andrew Borja*
Merced M. Borja
John Juan and Lhynn Borja, *grandchildren: Jamie (Jabraal Barney), Clarisse Joy, Joshua, and Justine John*
Sebastian M. Borja
Rosa Maria and Larry R. Kelley, *granddaughter Patricia and Leonard Lemar with great grandchildren Levante and Rebecca; granddaughter: Katherine Del and Maria Leon, granddaughter Juliette with great grandchildren Celiste Eriana and Liliana Rose, and grandson Larry Jr and Gina Kelley with great grandchildren Ezekiel Thomas, Alexander Michael, Levi James, and Charlotte Day.*
Angelina Borja and Edward Quinata
Jesse Frankie and Kellie Borja *with grandsons Nicolas Michael and Jesse James*
Ann Catherine and John Mullarkey, *granddaughter Jessica Candice and Bobby Ray Peoples III with great grandchildren Bobby IV and Krew Gregory; granddaughter Samantha Ann; and grandson David Richard*
Dick (Richard) Alixander and Michelle Borja, *grandson Alixander Jesse and Steffany Borja with great grandchildren Aubrianna Michelle and Nevaen Iseabail; grandsons: Michel Gregory, Jeremy David, and Zachery Elias.*
Sister and Spouse: Ana Tudela Muna and Peter Lawrence Taitano
Sisters-in-law: Juana Sablan Muna and Milagro Lizama Muna

Interment will be at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery in San Antonio, Texas with her loving husband.

Mystery around disappearance of Chinese star Fan Bingbing

BEIJING (AP)—X-Men star Fan Bingbing's Beijing management office is dark and abandoned. Her birthday passed almost unremarked in China's hyper-adrenalized social media environment.

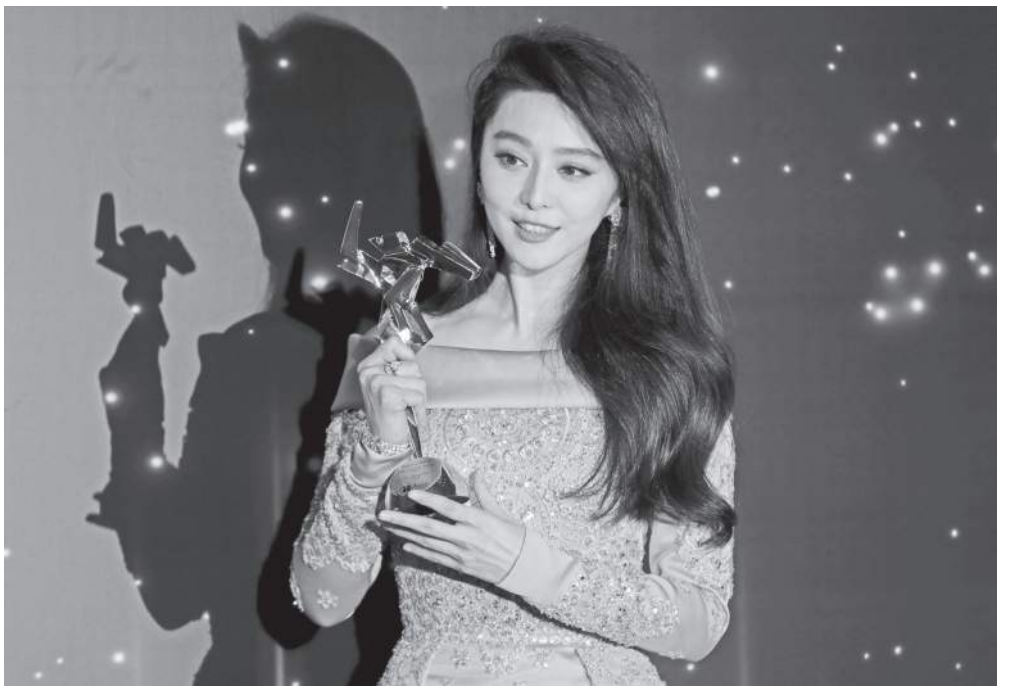
For one of China's best known stars and a rising Hollywood actress, Fan's vanishing is stunning, coming amid vague allegations of tax fraud and possibly other infractions that could have put her at odds with Chinese authorities.

Fan has starred in dozens of movies and TV series in China and is best known internationally for her role as Blink in 2014's "X-Men: Days of Future Past," a cameo in the Chinese version of "Iron Man 3," and star turns on the red carpet at Cannes as recently as May. She was booked to star with Penelope Cruz in the Hollywood film "355" and has a role in the upcoming Bruce Willis-Adrien Brody feature "Air Strike."

Yet for nearly three months, Fan hasn't been seen or heard from in public in any verifiable way.

One of China's wealthiest entertainers, Fan pulled down tens of millions of dollars for her roles, along with handsome sums in appearance fees and product endorsements. Some of those contracts may have landed her in hot water with the authorities.

Fan's name has been mentioned in reports about a reportedly common entertainment industry practice—an actor having a public contract stating an official salary and a private contract detailing the true, much higher payday. A talk show host, Cui Yongyuan had said in May that Fan had such an arrangement—which allegedly helps facilitate tax evasion—and revealed details that sparked a public outcry. Cui later apologized.



In this March 21, 2017, file photo, Chinese actress Fan Bingbing poses after winning the Best Actress Award of the Asian Film Awards in Hong Kong. AP

At Fan's management office in Beijing's Dongcheng district, doors are locked, the lights are out and a calendar hanging alongside posters advertising Fan's film appearances is still turned to July. A worker at an office across the hall said she couldn't remember the last time she'd seen anyone enter the company premises.

Fan turned 37 on Sept. 16, but only a handful of entertainment notables sent greetings online, a stark break from the past when her birthday celebrations were lavish, well-attended affairs, marked last year by a public marriage proposal from boyfriend Li Chen.

An automatic birthday greeting on her once-active account on Weibo, China's main microblogging service, was apparently deleted by persons unknown.

Shi Shusi, a columnist and commentator on Chinese popular culture, suggests Fan's high profile was her undoing, having made her a target for officials wishing to set an example for would-be tax cheats amid China's slowing economy.

"Such a famous actress and no one knows her whereabouts. And no authorities have made any clarifications. This is the real suspense," Shi said.

Fan's disappearance even brought a message of concern from Hu Xijin, editor of the Global Times tabloid known for its hard-line pro-Communist Party nationalist opinions.

"A timely clarification and public notification of Fan Bingbing's status would also be beneficial to setting the record straight internationally," Hu wrote on his Weibo account on Sept. 15.

Back in June, Fan's production company denied Fan had ever a signed a "yinyang" contract, so named because of its dual natures. Fan, her production company and her agent could not be reached for more recent comment. Police rarely acknowledge such investigations are taking place until a conclusion has been reached.

Her disappearance had come as Chinese authorities seek to rein in high salaries for actors that can eat up much of the cost of a production. In June, regulators capped star pay at 40 percent of a TV show's entire production budget and 70 percent of the total paid to all the actors in a film.

Though China has become the world's second-largest film market, authorities keep tight control on local productions, exercising final say over choice of cast, director and script. If Fan had stepped on official toes, it would be a simple task to retaliate by destroying her career, with Chinese authorities wielding broad powers to detain, interrogate and accuse citizens out of the public eye.

Other celebrities have run afoul of authorities over drug use, excessive pay or tax issues, said Shaun Rein, managing director of China Market Research Group based in Shanghai.

'House With a Clock in Its Walls' ticks to No. 1 in theaters

NEW YORK (AP)—The gothic family fantasy "The House With a Clock in Its Walls" exceeded expectations to debut with an estimated $26.9 million in ticket sales at the weekend box office, while audiences showed considerably less interest in Michael Moore's Donald Trump-themed documentary, "Fahrenheit 11/9," than his George W. Bush-era one.

"The House With a Clock in Its Walls" was easily the biggest draw on a quiet weekend at North American movie theaters, where the other three new wide releases all disappointed or downright flopped.

"Fahrenheit 11/9" opened with $3.1 million in 1,719 cinemas—a huge debut for most documentaries but a fraction of the $23.9 million opening generated in 2004 by Moore's record-breaking "Fahrenheit 9/11." That film went on to make $222.4 million worldwide, a record for documentaries.

Moore's new film, which examines the rise of Trump and other developments like the water crisis in his hometown of Flint, Michigan, was the first release from former Open Road chief executive Tom Ortenberg's new distributor, Briarcliff Entertainment. It had been predicted to open with $5 million to $8 million.

But despite a surge in success for documentaries at the box office—including "RBG," "Won't You Be My Neighbor" and "Three Identical Strangers"—"Fahrenheit 11/9" didn't catch on.

Dan Fogelman's "Life Itself" and the home invasion thriller "Assassination Nation" both barely made a blip in nationwide release. Though Fogelman's "This Is Us" is one of TV's top-rated series, his "Life Itself" bombed with $2.1 million despite a starry cast including Olivia Wilde, Oscar Isaac and Antonio Banderas.

The film—an unabashedly sentimental tale of destiny across generations—drew some of the most scathing reviews of the year, landing it a 13 percent "fresh" rating on Rotten Tomatoes.

In an interview last week, Fogelman blamed "primarily white male critics who don't like anything that has any emotion," prompting many female critics to point out that they, too, thought "Life Itself" was, as Variety's Jessica Kiang wrote, "manipulative and contrived."

1. "**The House With a Clock in Its Walls**," $26.9 million ($8.7 million international).
2. "**A Simple Favor**," $10.4 million ($5.2 million international).
3. "**The Nun**," $10.3 million ($35.4 million international).
4. "**The Predator,**" $8.7 million ($15.2 million international).
5. "**Crazy Rich Asians**," $6.5 million ($5.1 million international).
6. "**White Boy Rick**," $5 million.
7. "**Peppermint**," $3.7 million ($1.6 million international).
8. "**Fahrenheit 11/9**," $3.1 million.
9. "**The Meg**," $2.4 million ($3.4 million international).
10. "**Searching**," $2.2 million ($3.6 million international).

The Amazon Studios release, which opened in 2,609 theaters, was one of the worst performing wide releases of the year, as was Sam Levinson's "Assassination Nation." The Neon thriller grossed just $1 million in 1,403 theaters.

But Universal Pictures' "The House With a Clock in Its Walls," based on the classic book written by John Bellairs and illustrated by Edward Gorey, capitalized on a recent dearth of child-friendly options. The film, directed by the horror veteran Eli Roth with a budget of $40 million, stars Jack Black and Cate Blanchett.

"This was on the high end of any expectations," said Jim Orr, head of distribution at Universal. Orr credited the studio's producing partners at Amblin Entertainment as well as the release date in a normally slow month. "We really saw an opportunity in late September to kick off the fall season with this PG family film, and obviously it was well-positioned."

With the fall movie season getting started, a few specialty films hit theaters, drawing packed theaters in limited release.

Bleecker Street's "Colette," starring Keira Knightley as the iconic French author, debuted with $156,000 in four theaters, good for a per-screen average of $39,000. Jacques Audiard's dark Western "The Sisters Brothers," starring Joaquin Phoenix and John C. Reilly, opened with $122,000 in four theaters for a $30,500 per-screen average.

Last week's top film, "The Predator," slid fast with a 65 percent drop, earning $8.7 million in its second week. Holding stronger was Lionsgate's "A Simple Favor." Paul Feig's suburban noir, starring Blake Lively and Anna Kendrick, dropped only 35 percent for a $10.4 million second weekend.

"Fahrenheit 11/9" may have decent weeks ahead leading up to the November midterm elections. ComScore's PostTrak survey found that 82 percent of viewers gave it four out of five stars. It landed an A CinemaScore.

"Those who did see it really enjoyed it," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for comScore. "People have said: Should they have gone limited? Should they have gone wide? I think they needed to get it out there nationwide with midterms six weeks away. But it's very easy to second-guess how to release a documentary like this. It's one of the most difficult types of films to release."

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to comScore. Where available, the latest international numbers for Friday through Sunday also are included. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

Judge to decide if Cosby goes to prison for '04 sex assault

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (AP)—Bill Cosby faced the start of a sentencing hearing Monday at which a judge will decide how to punish the 81-year-old comedian who blazed the trail for other black entertainers and donated millions to black causes but preyed on at least one young woman and perhaps many more.

Cosby was the first celebrity to go to trial in the #MeToo era and could be the first to go to prison—perhaps for the rest of his days—after being convicted in April of drugging and sexually assaulting former Temple University employee Andrea Constand at his suburban Philadelphia home in 2004.

Daniel Filler, dean of Drexel University's Kline School of Law, said judges can't help being influenced a little by the "optics" of a case—that it, how it is going to look to the public.

Cosby

In this instance, "the judge is going to get flak," he said. "The judge is going to get less flak if they see Bill Cosby walk out in cuffs."

At the end of the potentially two-day hearing, Montgomery County Judge Steven T. O'Neill could sentence Cosby to as much as 30 years in prison or send him home on probation. The state guidelines for someone like Cosby, with no prior convictions, call for about one to four years behind bars.

"Obviously, the allegations are serious, and, except for his age and poor health, would normally warrant some jail time," said Samuel Stretton, a veteran defense lawyer not connected to the case.

Cosby is legally blind and uses a cane, something his lawyers are certain to point out along with his achievements and philanthropy. Prosecutors hoped to call some of his other accusers to paint Cosby as a sexual predator deserving of prison.

Whatever the sentence, Cosby is likely to be deemed a sexually violent predator and will have to undergo monthly counseling the rest of his life, in prison or out. Neighbors and schools will be warned he is living nearby.

In the years since Constand first went to police in 2005, more than 60 women have accused Cosby of sexual misconduct, though none of those claims have led to criminal charges.

Get out the needle: Tattoo artists show off their skills

BERLIN (AP)—Tattoo fans around the world may be wondering just where their favorite artists are.

Wonder no longer: Tattoo experts from 22 countries are showing off their skills at a convention in the Swiss lakeside city of Montreux.

The Montreux Tattoo Convention, which opened on Friday and ends Sunday, features some 160 artists along with concerts and competitions.

It's the fourth edition of the gathering.

AP

A tattoo artist tattooes a visitor at the fourth edition of the Montreux Tattoo Convention in Montreux, Switzerland, Saturday, Sept. 22, 2018.

Performance artist unhurt after hit by painting in Italy

ROME (AP)—A man has hit performance artist Marina Abramovic on the head with a painting at a Florence museum.

Palazzo Strozzi director Arturo Galansino tweeted that Abramovic was unhurt in the attack Sunday in the courtyard of the palazzo, which is hosting a retrospective about her. Galansino, the show's curator, says "everything's fine."

Italian media say the wood-framed painting is a portrait of Abramovic done by the attacker.

Galansino said Abramovic, who uses her body as an art medium, wanted to ask the man why he did it. Police are investigating.

Corriere della Sera says the alleged attacker twice stretched out nude in public in Florence, once lying on fake dollar bills, in recent years.

The retrospective runs through Jan. 20.

Meghan reveals 'something blue' she wore at royal wedding

LONDON (AP)—It's an old tradition that a bride should have something old, something new, something borrowed and something blue on her wedding day, and the Duchess of Sussex followed at least part of that when she married Prince Harry.

The former Meghan Markle has revealed in a television documentary that she had a piece of blue fabric from the dress she wore on her first date with Harry sewn into her wedding dress.

She made the comments while discussing the dress in a documentary about Queen Elizabeth II called "Queen of the World." She didn't say whether she also embraced the rest of the tradition.

The clip was made public Sunday. The documentary will be broadcast at a later date. It deals with the queen's role as head of the Commonwealth.

The duchess described her May wedding on the grounds of Windsor Castle as a "magical day."

The American actress who starred in "Suits" married Harry on May 19 on the grounds of Windsor Castle.

The "Queen of the World" will air in the U.K. on Tuesday.

AP

In this file photo dated Saturday, May 19, 2018, Britain›s Prince Harry and Meghan Markle leave after their wedding ceremony at St. George's Chapel in Windsor Castle, in Windsor, England.

Woman is hurt to be left out of bestfriend's wedding party

DEAR ABBY: My best friend and I are middle-aged women. Throughout our long friendship, I have been one of the few people in her life who was there for her as she dealt with boyfriend problems, elderly parents, serious illnesses, deaths, etc.

She became engaged for the first time recently, and asked me to go out of town with her to check out a potential wedding venue. While we were there, she looked away (wouldn't even look me in the eye) and announced that only her sister (with whom she doesn't get along) would be in her wedding party.

Although I was deeply disappointed, I said nothing. I was more disappointed about the way she made the announcement.

Since then, she has asked for my advice on everything from invitations to wedding etiquette, etc., instead of asking her sister, who lives out of state. At this point, I just want to be a guest at the wedding and enjoy seeing her get married. How do I bow out of this untitled role she has given me?

BOWING OUT IN THE WEST

DEAR BOWING OUT: If your friend had felt good about making the announcement, she wouldn't have hesitated to look you in the eye. I suspect that she included her sister—who she doesn't get along with—in her wedding party because of pressure from relatives.

Because you feel her questions should more appropriately be answered by the sister, tell your friend—as kindly as possible—she should be asking her maid of honor, who is "only a phone call away."

DEAR ABBY: I fell in love with my first crush 30 years ago. We both felt the same way, but because I was six years younger than him, my parents didn't approve. We lost contact, and over the years, I would sometimes wonder what had happened to him. Last week his cousin found me on Facebook, and I was able to video call him. We were filled with emotion and realized our feelings haven't changed.

We both have families. I'm divorced with two young adults. He's married with three young adults. I don't want to cause him any problems, and yet, I'm willing to let it play out and see what happens. All I want is just to see him again, but I'm afraid of what will happen. Please tell me what to do!

FULL OF EMOTIONS

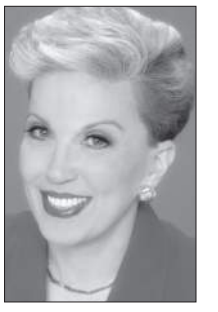
DEAR FULL OF EMOTIONS: The problem with making important decisions when we are "full of emotions" is they're usually impulsive and the wrong choice. Consider this: You and this man are adults with responsibilities to others. If you see him and he still feels the same as you stated, it may be the start of an affair and the end of his marriage.

If it's an affair, you will be his side dish and unable to form a meaningful relationship with anyone else for years. If divorce is involved, his wife and children will be collateral damage. Because I'm not sure you have the strength to keep your distance if you meet him, ask him to include his wife and family when you do, and bring along your children.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

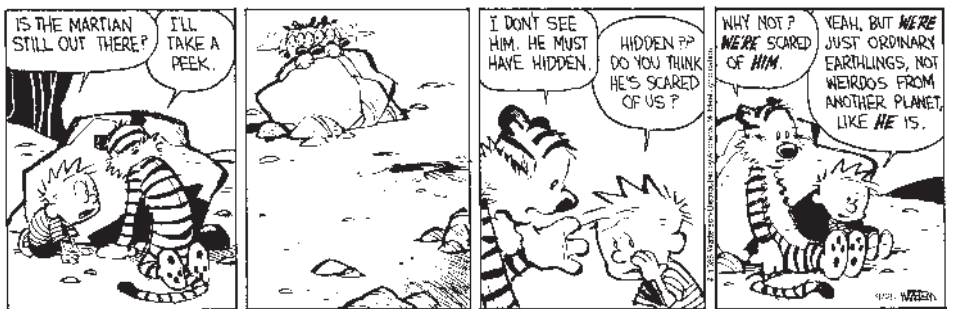


Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


IS THE MARTIAN STILL OUT THERE?
I'LL TAKE A PEEK.
I DON'T SEE HIM. HE MUST HAVE HIDDEN.
HIDDEN?? DO YOU THINK HE'S SCARED OF US?
WHY NOT? WE'RE SCARED OF HIM.
YEAH, BUT WE'RE JUST ORDINARY EARTHLINGS, NOT WEIRDOS FROM ANOTHER PLANET, LIKE HE IS.

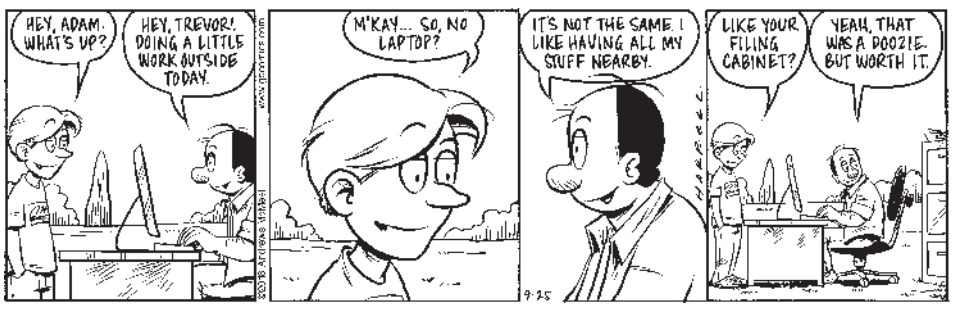
Garfield®

By Jim Davis

I HAVE A NEW PHILOSOPHY, GARFIELD
AND THAT WOULD BE?
I'M GOING TO LIVE EACH DAY LIKE IT'S MY BIRTHDAY
WHY IS THAT?
THAT WAY WE CAN EAT MORE CAKE!
GREAT STOMACHS THINK ALIKE!
JIM DAVIS 9-25

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


HEY, ADAM. WHAT'S UP?
HEY, TREVOR! DOING A LITTLE WORK OUTSIDE TODAY.
M'KAY... SO, NO LAPTOP?
IT'S NOT THE SAME. I LIKE HAVING ALL MY STUFF NEARBY.
LIKE YOUR FILING CABINET?
YEAH, THAT WAS A POOZIE. BUT WORTH IT.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

SHOULDN'T WE WAIT UNTIL THANKSGIVING TO EAT THIS PIE?
BEN FRANKLIN SAID "NEVER PUT OFF TILL TOMORROW THE PIE YOU CAN EAT TODAY."
THAT'S WHY HE INVENTED THE OVEN AFTER FLYING HIS HANG GLIDER.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Hawaiian island
5 Pen tip
8 Pop
12 Hunger symptom
13 Eggs
14 "Once — a time ..."
15 Assume, as a burden
17 Predicament
18 Sailor's assent
19 "Reckon so"
21 Stag
24 Luminary
25 Writer Ephron
26 Act conspicuously
30 "Rocks"
31 Reek
32 6 on a phone
33 Footwear storage unit
35 Proscribes
36 Active person
37 Skeleton components
38 Bacon pieces
41 Dazzle
42 Debtors' notes
43 Workers' jargon
48 Jules Verne captain
49 "A mouse!"
50 Nantes notion
51 "NFL Live" channel
52 Coloring agent
53 Whirlpool

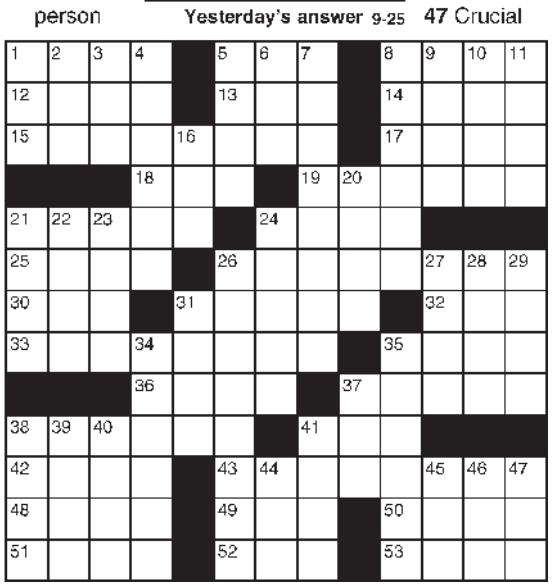
DOWN

1 AWOL pursuers
2 Satisfied sigh
3 Dos preceder
4 Big lizard
5 Protuberance
6 "— had it!"
7 Male singing voice
8 Outlying area
9 Mayberry moppet
10 Dresses in
11 &&&&
16 Caustic solution
20 Stare stupidly
21 Blackbirds
22 Scottish lake
23 Black-and-white cookie
24 Less outgoing
26 Emphasized
27 Muscat's land
28 Novelist Rice
29 Throw
31 Halt
34 Prolific inventor
35 Pasta shape
37 Jazzy style
38 Trig function
39 Low digits
40 Kind of roast
41 Stirred
44 "Psst!"
45 Do sums
46 Started
47 Crucial

Solution time: 22 mins.

Z	I	P		S	T	U	B	S		P	E	W
A	D	O		A	I	S	L	E		A	P	E
P	C	L	A	R	B	E	A	R		P	I	N
			A	T	C		B	I	S	C	C	T
D	E	P	A	R	T		S	C	E	R		
O	S	U		E	A	T		S	A	B	E	R
I	A	N	D		N	A	R		I	A	R	A
L	J	C	I	A		G	A	S		G	A	G
		H	O	D	S		C	H	A	S	T	E
L	E	B	R	O	N		K	C	N			
O	V	O		P	O	I	B	C		L	E	R
N	E	W		T	R	E	A	T		A	W	E
E	L	L		S	T	A	Y	S		D	E	B

Yesterday's answer 9-25



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Donald Glover, 35; Catherine Zeta-Jones, 49; Will Smith, 50; Michael Douglas, 74.

Happy Birthday: Express your feelings this year, and set your sights on the journey you want to take. Dreaming about something and actually making it manifest are two different things. Don't wait for someone to do things for you. It's important to take charge and to pick the path that's best for you. Your numbers are 5, 18, 21, 23, 32, 36, 40.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Consider your options before letting your emotions take over. Look for a positive response when dealing with others. Whether you are looking for a job or dealing with someone who is difficult, be efficient and take care of your responsibilities first. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* A change will do you good, but it may not please some of the people you work or live with. If you are upfront about your whereabouts and reasons for doing what you do, it will help ward off interference. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Offering to help others is kind, but don't let anyone take advantage of you. Get the facts before you lend money or help someone looking for a handout. Don't be too vocal about what you have or what you can do. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Stay focused on what you are doing. Let your creativity take over. Do things your way and stay out of discussions that could lead to repercussions with someone at work or at home. The less said, the better. ✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Travel, meetings and educational pursuits are highlighted. Keep an open mind and learn from what you hear, observe and experience. The best change you can make is one that will encourage better relationships. Compliment others, and you'll reap the rewards. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Get out and try something new. It will change your perspective and give you something to consider. A positive change is heading your way, and an improved relationship with someone special looks promising. A change to the way you live is favored. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Emotions can hold you back. You have to think clearly about what you should do next. Make choices based on how they will influence your personal finances, not because someone is pleading with you to do something questionable. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Take a moment to figure out what's best for you. An emotional situation concerning a friend or someone who depends on you should be handled carefully. Don't let anyone take advantage of you, and don't pay for someone else's mistake. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Refuse to let emotional matters interfere with your productivity. Finish what you start and protect your reputation. A change you make to the way you earn your living or to your arrangement at home will be to your benefit. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Listen to instructions and ask questions if something doesn't make sense. How you handle those in charge will make a difference to the way you are treated. Professionalism at work and diplomacy at home will be in your best interest. ✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Money matters should be handled smartly. Emotions and joint ventures can lead to loss. Don't feel you have to overdo it to make an impression. Let experience and knowledge be your guides to successful endeavors. You cannot buy love. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Concentrate on yourself and how to project your very best into whatever you take on. Working alongside someone with grand ideas can be stimulating but also expensive. Don't be afraid to forgo a joint venture and do your own thing. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are sensitive, caring and intuitive. You are creative and opportunistic.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		5				1		
	3	9	7					6
	6			8	4			
4	9					5		
		8				2		
		7					8	3
			2	7			6	
5					9	8	3	
	2				6			

Difficulty Level ★★ 9/25

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

7	2	6	1	5	9	8	3	4
5	1	3	4	8	6	2	9	7
8	9	4	3	2	7	6	1	5
9	5	8	7	1	4	3	6	2
6	7	2	5	3	8	9	4	1
3	4	1	9	6	2	5	7	8
1	6	9	8	7	5	4	2	3
4	3	5	2	9	1	7	8	6
2	8	7	6	4	3	1	5	9

Difficulty Level ★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

CHESS VS. CHECKERS Solution: 9 letters

S	P	I	L	F	O	R	W	A	R	D	T	R	A	P
R	I	Y	T	I	L	I	B	A	W	A	L	C	H	L
N	E	E	U	Q	D	L	P	O	N	U	N	S	E	E
F	C	Y	R	R	O	A	O	W	F	C	D	K	G	H
I	E	O	A	C	E	D	A	R	K	R	Ⓟ	Ⓛ	Ⓐ	Ⓝ
R	W	W	K	L	D	P	E	T	A	E	R	G	M	R
S	O	K	S	A	P	W	S	W	R	O	O	K	E	O
T	R	D	E	R	O	Q	K	M	P	Y	A	K	G	U
N	L	L	L	P	U	C	H	P	T	G	C	E	N	N
E	D	L	U	A	A	T	O	P	E	E	H	C	I	D
M	D	A	R	B	H	N	O	L	H	T	O	N	N	K
E	R	E	E	G	E	H	E	C	O	A	I	A	N	C
V	A	V	I	N	S	T	A	C	K	R	C	H	I	A
O	O	E	T	I	E	V	L	E	W	T	E	C	W	L
M	B	R	B	K	N	I	G	H	T	S	U	N	O	B

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Ability, Bishop, Black, Block, Board, Bonus, Chance, Check, Choice, Color, Dark, Eighth, First, Flips, Forward, Game, Great, Help, Knight, Lead, Leap, Move Backwards, Movement, Opponent, Pawn, Piece, Plan, Player, Powerful, Queen, Rank, Red, Reveal, Rook, Round, Rows, Rules, Square, Stack, Strategy, Toward, Trap, Twelve, White, Winning, Wood, World

Yesterday's Answer: Queen of Soul

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 39 through 54, order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

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Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan
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Phone (670) 433-2200 • Fax (670) 433-1819
Email: tinianscholarship@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board hereby gives notice that there will be a Regular Meeting on Friday, September 28, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. at the Northern Marianas College, Tinian campus, building B (room E) in San Jose Village, Tinian.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY
A. Call to Order
B. Roll Call
C. Election of Officers
a.) Chairman
b.) Vice Chairman
c.) Secretary
d.) Treasurer
D. Adoption of Agenda
E. Adoption of Minutes
1. March 10, 2018
a. Recessed and Reconvened: August 10, 2018
2. August 18, 2018
a. Recessed and Reconvened: August 25, 2018

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. NEW BUSINESS
A. Training Assistance/Voc-Ed/ Degree Program
1.) Police Cadets

V. MISCELLANEOUS

VI. SCHEDULE OF NEXT BOARD MEETING

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION[2]

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

/S/Rodney S. Cabarles
Acting Chairman

[1]We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments on the day of the meeting.
[2] PPursuant to 1 CMC section 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.
[3]Individuals with special needs requiring special accommodations, please contact the TMSB office at least 48 hours prior to schedule meeting for assistance.

MGS
MARIANAS GEOTECH SERVICES
Chalan Msgr. Guerrero Rd., Dandan
P.O. Box 501585, Saipan, MP 96950
(670) 234-7645

JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

PROJECT ENGINEER

DUTIES: Plan and execute detailed phases of geotechnical investigations, testing and instrumentation programs, and other technical work. Provide direction to other technical staff in completing project tasks. Provide quality control review of technical work and deliverables. Coordinate with clients, project managers, and other stakeholders regarding projects. Project-specific travel required.

QUALIFICATIONS: Bachelor's degree in engineering from a U.S. college or university or foreign equivalent, at least 2 years of geotechnical and/or relevant engineering experience, computer proficient, valid CNMI driver's license, and good oral and written communication skills.

SALARY: Determined based on qualifications

ASSISTANT ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN

DUTIES: Assist engineering technicians in performing field and laboratory testing, and soil investigations. Prepare draft reports based on project observations and inspections. Input field and laboratory data. Communicate with clients, project managers, and others regarding projects. Other duties as assigned by supervisor. Project-specific travel required.

QUALIFICATIONS: High school diploma or GED, at least 1 year of relevant experience and/or training, computer proficient, valid CNMI driver's license, and good oral and written communication skills.

HOURLY RATE: Determined based on qualifications (plus OT)

Applications are available at **www.marianasgeotech.com**, and at the MGS office in Dandan, and must be submitted by **October 8, 2018**, to Chelsea Borja at admin@marianasgeotech.com or at the MGS office.

WHATZIT Solution: Hang on a minute

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Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 5-day run in both print and online editions, for as low as $30 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$15	$30
• 5-Liner	$24	$45

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Classified Ads

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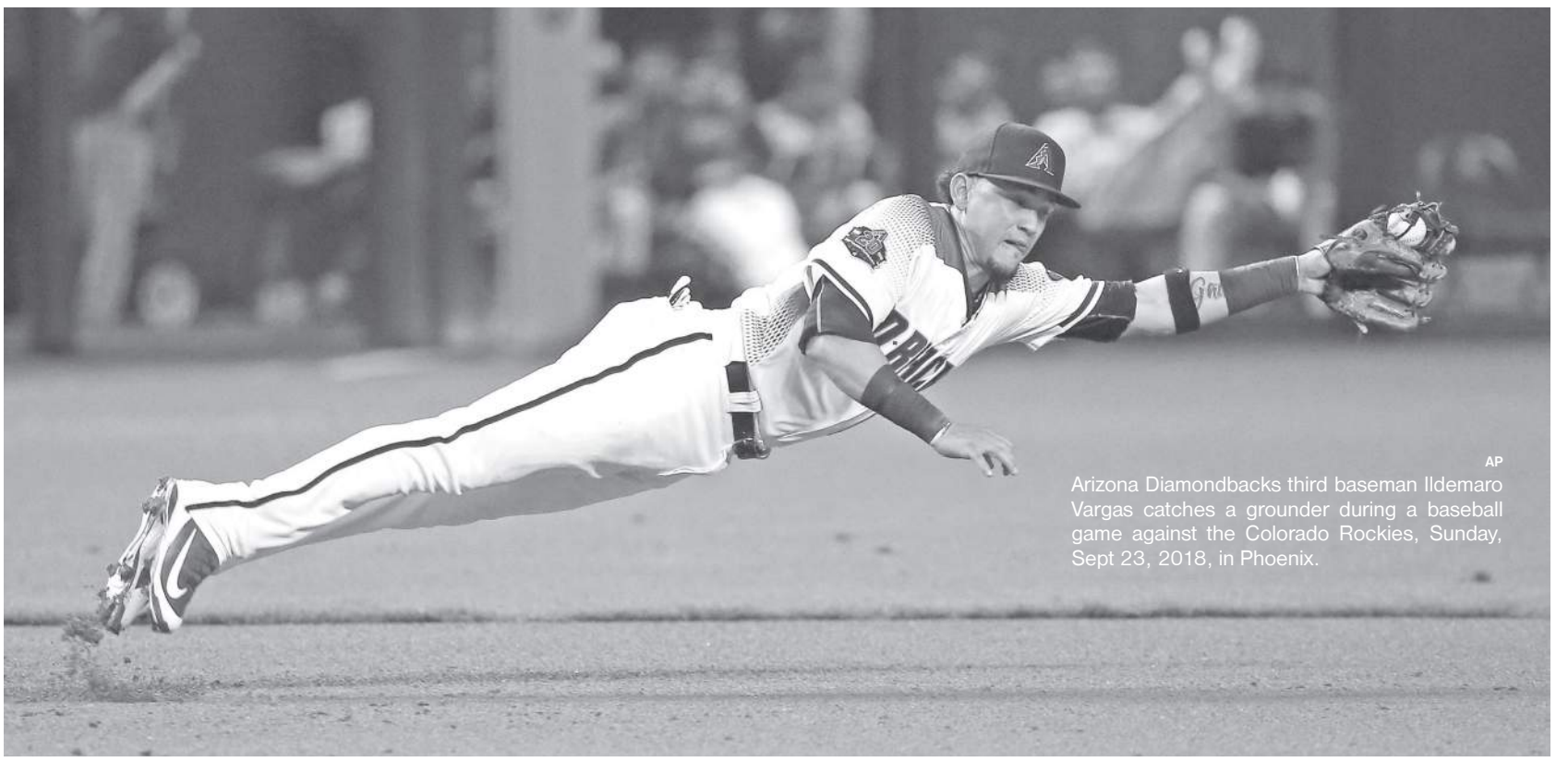

AP
Arizona Diamondbacks third baseman Ildemaro Vargas catches a grounder during a baseball game against the Colorado Rockies, Sunday, Sept 23, 2018, in Phoenix.

OAKLAND (AP)— Oakland will have to take its bubbly on the road.

Kyle Gibson allowed one run over 7 1/3 innings, Jake Cave hit a two-run homer and the Minnesota Twins beat the Athletics 5-1 Sunday, preventing Oakland from clinching an AL wild-card berth in its last regular-season home game.

"I think it was a little disappointing," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "A lot of times we put on our best shows late in games, unfortunately it didn't happen today."

Oakland leads Tampa Bay by 7½ games and needs one win or a Rays loss to clinch its first playoff berth in four years. The A's remained 1½ games behind the New York Yankees, who have clinched a wild-card berth, and fell 4½ games back of AL West-leading Houston.

After going 50-31 for its best home record since 2013, the A's finish with three-game series at Seattle and the Los Angeles Angels. Oakland is 60-26 since mid-June.

"It would have been nice to clinch, but we weren't changing anything up or anything like that," A's first baseman Matt Olson said.

Orioles 6, Yankees 3

In New York, Yankees shortstop Didi Gregorius has torn cartilage in his right wrist and is unsure whether he will be able to play in the AL wild-card game on Oct. 3.

Gregorius, who has 27 homers and 86 RBIs, got injured Saturday when he slid headfirst on Aaron Hicks' 11th-inning double to score the run that clinched a postseason berth for New York, which disclosed the injury after a 6-3 loss to the Baltimore Orioles on Sunday.

New York remained 1½ games ahead of Oakland for the top AL wild card.

Indians 4, Red Sox 3, 11 innings

In Cleveland, Greg Allen singled with one out and the bases loaded in the 11th inning and Cleveland denied Boston's bid for a club-record 106th victory for the second straight game.

Allen singled through the left side on a 3-2 pitch from Robby Scott to give the Indians an 11th inning win for the second night in a row.

William Cuevas (0-2) walked leadoff man Jose Ramirez, who moved to second on Rajai Davis' sacrifice. Shortstop Tzu-Wei Lin booted Erik Gonzalez's ground ball, sending Ramirez to third. Yandy Diaz, batting for Yonder Alonso, was intentionally walked to load the bases and set the stage for Allen's winning hit.

Rays 5, Blue Jays 2

In Toronto, Blake Snell (21-5) won his ninth straight start, striking out 11 in 6 2/3 shutout innings. He broke the Rays season record for wins set by David Price in 2012 and lowered his ERA to 1.90, the best in the AL.

C.J. Cron and Brandon Lowe homered for Tampa Bay, which remained 7½ games behind Oakland for the AL's second wild card and would be eliminated with one more loss or win by the Athletics.

Cubs 6, White Sox 1

In Chicago, Kyle Schwarber connected off Carlos Rodon (6-7) for his first homer against a left-hander this season and drove in two runs as the NL Central-leading Cubs stayed 2½ games ahead of second-place Milwaukee.

Ben Zobrist had three hits and Kyle Hendricks (13-11) gave up one run and four hits in 7 2/3 innings.

Brewers 13, Pirates 6

In Pittsburgh, Christian Yelich hit his 32nd home run and Travis Shaw added his 31st as Milwaukee remained two games ahead of St. Louis, which is second in the NL wild-card race. Yelich finished 2 for 3, including a three-run homer in the second off Nick Kingham (5-7), to boost his batting average to an NL-leading .322.

Corey Knebel (3-3) won in relief.

Pittsburgh was eliminated and failed to reach the postseason for the third straight year.

Cardinals 9, Giants 2

In St. Louis, Miles Mikolas (17-4) won his fourth straight start, allowing two runs— one earned—and two hits in seven innings with eight strikeouts and no walks. John Brebbia and Giovanny Gallegos finished a five-hitter.

Matt Carpenter hit his NL-leading 36th homer and St. Louis remained 1½ games ahead of Colorado, which is third in the wild-card race,

Andrew Suarez (7-12) gave up two runs and six hits in five innings. The Giants finished 31-50 on the road for a two-year record of 57-105 away from home.

Dodgers 14, Padres 0

In Los Angeles, Hyun-Jin Ryu (6-3) allowed four hits and struck out eight in six scoreless innings and tied a career high with three of the Dodgers' 16 hits. Los Angeles maintained a 1½-games NL West lead over second-place Colorado.

Manny Machado and Matt Kemp hit solo homers, and Austin Barnes hit a two-run drive.

Rockies 2, Diamondbacks 0

In Phoenix, Kyle Freeland (16-7) allowed seven hits in seven innings, improving to 7-0 in his last 10 starts.

Arizona lost for the seventh time in eight games and was eliminated from contention in the NL West and wild-card races. The Diamondbacks led the division entering the final month but are 5-16 in September.

Astros 6, Angels 2

In Houston, Charlie Morton left after one inning and 24 pitches because of discomfort in his pitching shoulder that caused a drop in velocity. The 34-year-old right-hander did not pitch for the Astros from Aug. 28 until Sept. 8 because of right shoulder discomfort. He won his first two starts following his stint on the disabled list, allowing four runs in 11 innings.

AL West-leading Houston opened a 4½-game lead over second-place Oakland. Yuli Gurriel hit a two-run homer, giving him three homers and 10 RBIs in the three-game series.

Braves 2, Phillies 1

In Atlanta, Lane Adams homered and drove in two runs, and Anibal Sanchez (7-6) won for the first time in nine starts. Sanchez allowed one run and four hits in five innings, securing his role as Atlanta's No. 3 starter for the Division Series behind Mike Foltynewicz and Kevin Gausman.

Atlanta won its fifth straight, and Philadelphia was eliminated from postseason contention. The Phillies were swept in a four-game series in Atlanta for the first time since 1997.

Rangers 6, Mariners 1

In Arlington, Adrian Beltre was given a standing ovation when he was removed from what could be his last home game for Texas, just before the Rangers rallied for four runs in the sixth to overcome a 1-0 deficit.

The 39-year-old, playing his 21st major league season, struck out twice and is hitting .275 with 14 homers and 61 RBIs. The four-time All-Star, the active hits leader with 3,162, isn't sure he wants to play next year.

Marlins 6, Reds 0

In Miami, a crowd of 13,595 left Miami with a franchise-low home attendance of 811,104 in Derek Jeter's first season as chief executive officer, the first major league team to draw fewer than 1 million fans at home since the 2004 Montreal Expos. The Marlins are last in the NL East at 62-93 overall, their eighth consecutive losing season, and have not reached the playoffs since beating the Yankees in the 2003 World Series.

Rookie Chad Wallach hit his first big league home run, a three-run drive in a four-run third off Michael Lorenzen (3-2), who allowed nine hits in four innings.

Mets 8, Nationals 6

In Washington, Michael Conforto hit a go-ahead, bases-loaded triple in the fourth off Wander Suero (3-1), and Jeff McNeil matched a career high with four hits in raising his average to .328 in 195 at-bats since his big league debut on July 24.

The first pitch was delayed 25 minutes, and rain continued during the game, which lasted 4 hours, 14 minutes.

Royals 3, Tigers 2

In Detroit, rookie Brad Keller (9-6) allowed one run and three hits in seven innings, abd Cam Gallagher broke a sixth-inning tie with a two-run single off Drew VerHagen (3-3). Wily Peralta struck out Jim Adduci to earn his 13th save.

Rockets among teams interested in Butler

MINNESOTA— Could Jimmy Butler go home to Houston?

Apparently, the Rockets are interested in trying to make it happen, though we're not sure how the numbers would work out.

According to reports, the Rockets, Nets, Pistons, Clippers, Heat, 76ers and Blazers are "interested in talking further with Minnesota" about trying to acquire the four-time All-Star. The Cavs are also interested acquiring Butler.

Houston has a problem, though. They are already $11.444 million over the luxury cap threshold. Butler is set to make $20.445 million in 2018-19 and $19.841 million in 2019-20, so the Rockets would have to do salary cap gymnastics to make a deal work.

On Friday, GM Daryl Morey told The Houston Chronicle that the Rockets are "doing what we can to prepare for" the Warriors.

Meanwhile, New Orleans Pelicans forward Anthony Davis has changed agents and will now be represented by the high-powered firm that also counts LeBron James among its clients.

The five-time NBA All-Star announced an official agreement with Rich Paul's Klutch Sports Group on Sunday.

Davis still has two seasons and $52 million remaining on his current contract with the Pelicans, but he'll be eligible next summer for a maximum five-year, $230 million extension.

The move raises speculation Davis could put pressure on the Pelicans to trade him—possibly joining James on the Los Angeles Lakers—in much the same way former Pelicans guard Chris Paul forced the team to trade him in 2010.

Tiger caps off amazing comeback with a win

AP

Tiger Woods celebrates after picking up his putt for par on the 18th green to win the final round of the Tour Championship golf tournament Sunday, Sept. 23, 2018, in Atlanta.

ATLANTA—Wearing shades, his black Nike hat on backwards and a black tank top that revealed massive arms, Tiger Woods, carrying his Sunday red in one hand, strolled to the clubhouse at East Lake Golf Club for the final round of The Tour Championship.

It was a picture of confidence, an intimidating one at that, an image of a man who was in total control and knew what lie ahead.

Six hours later, and after a wardrobe change, Woods was posing with the championship hardware, a portrait that seemed impossible 18 months ago.

With a two-shot victory in the season finale, a win reminiscent of so many from his best days of yesteryear, Woods capped a comeback for the ages and completed his climb out of an abyss of physical agony, mental anguish and spiritual loss. The 14-time major champion also continued his remarkable climb up the official world rankings, all the way to No. 13 after starting his comeback ranked No. 1,199th.

"I had a hard time not crying coming up the last hole," said Woods, who finished second in the FedExCup and won a $3 million bonus. "The people who are close to me saw the struggles and what I was going through, and some of the players that I'm pretty close to, they've really helped throughout this process the last few years.

"I've explained throughout the year that I just didn't know whether this would ever happen again. If I could somehow piece together a golf swing this year, I felt like I could do it. My hands are good enough, and I just didn't know if I could piece together a golf swing. But somehow, I've been able to do that, and here we are."

Woods wasn't the only winner at East Lake. Despite finishing in a tie for fourth, world No. 1 Justin Rose finished No. 1 in the FedEx Cup.

But this day belonged to Woods and his legion of fans who have been hoping it would come for some time. Even Woods was among those who didn't know if this day would come, his body punished enough to require four surgeries to his left knee and four surgeries to his back.

At times he couldn't walk, was forced to crawl and had pain constantly shooting up his back and down his leg.

His way of life was a daily struggle. But 17 months removed from fusion surgery to his spine, and 16 months after he hit rock bottom and the world saw the alarming mug shot following his arrest for suspicion of DUI, Woods was a picture of health and joy after PGA Tour victory No. 80 and his first since 2013, or in 1,876 days.

"Eighty is a big number," Woods said. "I've been sitting on 79 for about five years now, and to get 80 is a pretty damned good feeling."

After starting his latest comeback with tempered expectations and doubts about how long he could play, Woods steadily pieced together his swing and his game.

A key moment came in February after Woods missed the cut in the Genesis Open. It was then that Woods realized he was healthy enough to add a tournament to his schedule instead of subtracting, which he feared he'd have to do at the start of the year. Woods knew if he stayed healthy, he'd put together a swing that would work at the highest level in golf.

With each passing month, Woods tinkered with his equipment to coincide with his swing. Later in the year, he used three different putter models in three consecutive starts.

And before the FedExCup Playoffs began, Woods changed the shaft and loft of his driver, losing a tad of distance but gaining accuracy and assurance. With a tie for fourth in the BMW Championship in his last start, Woods arrived here with all aspects of his game on point and a look about him that said he knew this would be the week.

After opening with a 65 to grab a share of the lead and then a 68 to maintain it, Woods assumed command with a Saturday blitz in which he birdied six of his first seven holes.

Armed with a three-shot lead after 54 holes, Woods became the Woods of old, keeping his pursuers at bay with a conservative approach that was still lethal as other scrambled to make birdies. After making birdie on the first to stretch his lead, Woods aimed for fairways and the middle of the greens and two-putted the field into submission.

Woods pumped his lead to five shots but it was down to two after consecutive bogeys on holes 15 and 16. But he parred in and strolled to victory with thousands of fans walking behind him on the 18th fairway. After his final stroke, he raised his hands in the air, then hugged his caddie, Joe LaCava, his girlfriend, Erica Herman, and his playing partner, Rory McIlroy.

Woods finished at 11 under with a 71. Billy Horschel, the 2014 FedExCup champion, shot 66 to finish second. Dustin Johnson (67) was third, and Rose (73), Hideki Matsuyama (65) and Webb Simpson (67) tied for fourth.

Just as it was back in his heyday, Woods with the 54-hole lead is money and extremely hard to catch. He is now 54-4 when he holds at least a share of the 54-hole lead and 24-for-24 when that lead is at least three shots.

For this week, Tiger Woods was Tiger Woods again, the best player on the planet who knew he was the best player on the planet.

And now the golf world awaits his encore next season.

"It's a miracle what he's done this year," Paul Azinger said. "This wasn't some ceremonial walk into the sunset. This guy's got game, some serious game. He's a living, breathing, walking medical miracle. To be doing what he's doing at the highest level in golf, it's truly amazing."

In a series of tweets, Jack Nicklaus, his record 18 majors a benchmark Woods has been pursuing his entire career, congratulated Woods.

"I never dreamed @TigerWoods could come back and swing the way he has, after surgery," Nicklaus tweeted. "I think you could argue he's swinging better than he has ever in his life.

"You knew he was going to win soon, and this week he did it."

Phil Mickelson said Woods' latest victory wasn't a shock to him either.

"He's played such good golf all year that it's just not surprising," Mickelson said. "It was just a matter of time before he won."

Rose wins $10M, takes FedEx Cup title

ATLANTA—"Justin Rose beats Tiger Woods" is not a headline you're going to see splattered across the Internet. Woods, by almost every sense known to man, was the victor at East Lake on Sunday. That includes the leader board, where Woods' 71 bested Rose's 73, the latter finishing five shots back of the former overall in the Tour Championship.

But there is one accounting system that declares Rose a winner: the FedEx Cup points system. Considering its $10 million payout, it's a mighty-important system.

"Yeah, it was awkward out there, really, today," Rose said. "It was a situation that I'd never really been in before."

Not that he should apologize. In theory, the FedEx Cup is designed to rewarded season-long excellence, a billing that certainly fits Rose. The Englishman has been a consistent tour de force during the 2017-2018 season, recording two wins, three runner-ups and 11 top-10 finishes in just 18 starts. It's been a long journey from the 18-year-old who missed 20-plus consecutive starts to No. 1 in the world. A journey, and the inherent struggles it suggests, that have made Rose the consummate professional, on and off the course.

"The game came easy to me as a kid," Rose admitted. "And although I worked hard, yeah, winning was easy, golf was easy, and then I think I turned pro and I missed 21 cuts. And I think that kind of has kept me honest in the sense of that's kept me working hard and kept me never taking it for granted. I think that's maybe where that comes from.

"But, yeah, when I set my goals at the beginning part of the year, it's not so much I want to win six times and I want to win the FedExCup, it's more I want to look at this area of my game, this area of my game, and this area of my game and how much can I improve there. So I'm definitely more process-driven than the outcome."

How he got to Sunday night wasn't a storybook ending. Starting his day three back of Woods, Rose failed to surmount a charge on the front nine, making the turn in even par. Any aspirations of winning the tournament were done with a bogey at the 11th.

But then he bogeyed the 14th and 16th, and suddenly it looked like the FedEx Cup, and what it does for the bank account, were out the window. Considering the mayhem heard throughout the course, lesser players would have crumbled.

"It's very hard, obviously, but that will be something I'll look at and try to recreate next time there's a scenario like this, might help me in a major champion down the stretch, whatever it may be," Rose said of the situation.

In upset of Pats, Lions hit reset button on season

DETROIT (AP)—Call off the shovels. Hold off the dirt. Tell the vultures they'll have to wait another week to pick apart the carcass.

The Detroit Lions aren't dead yet.

After imploding on national television two weeks ago in a stinkfest for the ages, then following that up with a mistake-filled slopfest in San Francisco, the Lions hit the reset button Sunday night at Ford Field.

And came out strutting. And running. And shoving the ball down the throat of the NFL's most ruthless bully, the Patriots, to the tune of a 26-10 victory.

How dominant were the Lions?

They doubled up New England in yards. Picked off Tom Brady. And formally introduced their promising rookie running back, Kerryon Johnson, who became the first Lions running back to rush for 100 yards since 2013.

AP

Detroit Lions running back Kerryon Johnson (33) breaks through the New England Patriots line during the second half of an NFL football game, Sunday, Sept. 23, 2018, in Detroit.

Bears 16, Cardinals 14

In Glendale, Arizona, Cody Parkey kicked his third field goal of the game, a 43-yarder with 4:31 to remaining, to rally the Chicago Bears to a victory over the winless Arizona Cardinals.

Sam Bradford threw two first-quarter touchdown passes to put the Cardinals up 14-0, but was replaced by rookie Josh Rosen after fumbling the ball away deep in Chicago territory late in the game.

Bills 27, Vikings 6

In Minneapolis, Josh Allen played with the poise of a well-seasoned quarterback for the Buffalo Bills by accounting for three touchdowns in his first road start in the NFL. Allen made Minnesota's Kirk Cousins look like the raw rookie in a stunning upset of the Vikings.

Cousins had three turnovers, including a lost fumble on a third-down sack inside Minnesota's 20-yard line, on each of the first two possessions.

Seahawks 24, Cowboys 13

In Seattle, Russell Wilson threw for two touchdowns in the first half, Chris Carson added a 5-yard TD run in early in the fourth quarter, and the Seattle Seahawks avoided a 0-3 start with a win over the Dallas Cowboys.

Wilson hit Jaron Brown on an 18-yard touchdown early in the second quarter, and later hit Tyler Lockett streaking up the sideline on a 52-yard scoring pass as Seattle (1-2) built a 17-3 halftime lead and cruised past the Cowboys.

Rams 35, Chargers 23

In Los Angeles, Jared Goff passed for 354 yards and three touchdowns, and Todd Gurley rushed for 105 yards and another score, leading the Rams to a victory over the Chargers in the franchises' first meeting since their relocations to Los Angeles.

Cory Littleton blocked a punt in the end zone and Blake Countess recovered it for an early touchdown for the Rams (3-0), who racked up 521 yards and remained one of the NFL's four unbeaten teams.

Saints 43, Falcons 37, OT

In Atlanta, Drew Brees' 1-yard run capped an 80-yard touchdown drive to open overtime. Brees' score came after his apparent 3-yard TD pass to Alvin Kamara was overturned on video review that determined Kamara's knee was down before the goal line. Brees scored on a keeper on the following play, giving the Saints (2-1) the win on the day the 39-year-old quarterback set the NFL record for career completions.

Eagles 20, Colts 16

In Philadelphia, Carson Wentz threw a touchdown pass on his first drive in nine months, then Wendell Smallwood ran in from the 4 for the go-ahead score.

Adam Vinatieri tied Morten Andersen's career record of 565 field goals by connecting on all three tries, but the Colts (1-2) couldn't take advantage of two turnovers by Wentz inside the 20 in the second half.

Chiefs 38, 49ers 27

In Kansas City, after winning his first three starts, all away from Arrowhead Stadium, second-year pro Patrick Mahomes finally made his regular-season home debut and torched San Francisco's banged-up pass defense for 314 yards and three touchdowns. Mahomes now has 13 touchdown passes without an interception, breaking the NFL record for TD passes in the first three weeks of a season. Peyton Manning threw 12 to start the 2013 campaign.

Dolphins 28, Raiders 20

In Florida, receiver Albert Wilson threw a 52-yard touchdown pass to put the Dolphins ahead midway through the fourth quarter, and then turned a short reception into a 74-yard score that sealed it.

Ravens 27, Broncos 14

In Baltimore, Joe Flacco picked apart Denver's depleted defense for 277 yards and a touchdown. Connecting with eight receivers, Flacco went 25 for 40 without an interception on a rainy afternoon. He threw 28 passes in the first half, when Baltimore (2-1) took control.

The Ravens turned to their defense in the fourth quarter, twice stopping drives inside their 15.

Titans 9, Jaguars 6

In Florida, Marcus Mariota came off the bench and directed three scoring drives, including one in the fourth quarter. Mariota replaced Blaine Gabbert in the first quarter after Gabbert was knocked out of the game with a concussion.

Mariota sat out last week's victory against Houston because of an elbow injury sustained in the season opener. He had been experiencing arm weakness along with numbness and tingling in two fingers. Mariota completed 12 of 18 passes for 100 yards and ran for 51 more, including a 15-yard gain on a third-and-1 play late.

Redskins 31, Packers 17

In Landover, Adrian Peterson ran for 120 yards and a pair of 2-yard scores, Alex Smith threw two touchdown passes—all in the first half—and the Redskins held on over a gimpy Aaron Rodgers and the Packers, who again had complaints about a roughing-the-passer penalty on Clay Matthews.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Boston	105	51	.673	—
y-New York	95	60	.613	9½
Tampa Bay	87	68	.561	17½
Toronto	71	85	.455	34
Baltimore	45	110	.290	59½

Central Division

x-Cleveland	87	68	.561	—
Minnesota	72	83	.465	15
Detroit	63	93	.404	24½
Chicago	61	94	.394	26
Kansas City	54	102	.346	33½

West Division

z-Houston	98	57	.632	—
Oakland	94	62	.603	4½
Seattle	85	70	.548	13
Los Angeles	75	81	.481	23½
Texas	66	89	.426	32

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

x-Atlanta	88	68	.564	—
Philadelphia	78	77	.503	9½
Washington	78	77	.503	9½
New York	72	83	.465	15½
Miami	62	93	.400	25½

Central Division

Chicago	90	64	.584	—
Milwaukee	89	67	.571	2
St. Louis	86	69	.555	4½
Pittsburgh	78	76	.506	12
Cincinnati	66	91	.420	25½

West Division

Los Angeles	86	69	.555	—
Colorado	84	70	.545	1½
Arizona	79	76	.510	7
San Francisco	72	83	.465	14
San Diego	62	93	.400	24

z-clinched playoff berth
x-clinched division
y-clinched wild card

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GCA

From Page 28

against Mt. Carmel, GCA 1 dueled Saipan Community last Wednesday and also earned the outright win after taking the first two sets of their match, 25-13, 25-8. The Eagles victory snapped the Tsunamis' three-game winning streak.

Meanwhile Agape Christian School 1 and GCA 2 also squared off in a make-up match yesterday with the former prevailing in straight sets. Agape 1 now has a 6-2 mark, prevailing in three of its last four matches and moving back to second place in the team standings. The complete rankings are unavailable, as other teams have yet to turn in results of last Thursday's games.

Today, the league will have a four-match schedule with the winless Agape 2 hosting Mt. Carmel in the 3:30pm match. At 4:30pm, Agape 1 will take on Seventh Day Adventist, while the two other games will have GCA 1 facing GCA 2 in Navy Hill and Saipan International School battling SCS at the Geckos court in As Lito.

The co-ed middle school competition is on the second round of the double-round robin regular season and teams at the bottom four must start picking up wins to avoid getting paired against higher-ranked squads in the playoffs.

After the regular season, the No. 1 finisher will be pitted against the last placer, while other pairings are as follows: No. 2 vs No. 7; No. 3 vs No. 6; and No. 4 vs No.5. The playoff round is scheduled to start on Oct. 16 and format is single elimination. The four teams that will survive the first round will play in the semis matches on Oct. 17, while the finals is set for Oct. 18.

PIC

From Page 28

first 3-point attempt, and Raymark Castro hit a long jumper in that rally. Henry Cruzada handed Imperial Pacific its first point after making his second free throw.

Imperial Pacific went on to nail only three field goals in the opening quarter, allowing PIC Saipan to take a 15-7 advantage after 10 minutes of play.

PIC Saipan then padded its lead in the second canto, as Sean Rabasto started suiting up for the San Antonio-based team. Rabasto recorded 6 points in the second period, which ended with PIC Saipan ahead by double figures, 30-17.

Rabasto and company managed to keep PIC Saipan's comfortable margin in the second half en route to the 16-point winning margin. Abuy drilled three more triples, while Castro made a couple more shots, and PIC Saipan's second stringers finished off Imperial Pacific.

Abuy top-scored for PIC Saipan with his 17 points, while Rabasto and Castro chipped in 13 and 10, respectively. Rafols added 9 and six other PIC Saipan players made it to the board for the squad's balance scoring.

In contrast, Cruzada carried the load for Imperial Pacific, as he fired a game-high 20 markers. Raymund Mabunga and Jone Bornales contributed 8 points each.

Second Game

PIC Saipan 67— Abuy 17, Rabasto 13, Castro 10, Rafols 9, Sublemente 4, Bartolo 3, Tolentino 3, Hernandez 3, Ricafort 3, Mojar 2.

Imperial Pacific 51 — Cruzada 20, Bornales 8, Mabunga 8, Ophimar 6, Cabigan 4, Densing 2, Asia 2, Baltazar 1.

Scoring by quarters: 15-7, 30-17, 44-30, 67-51.

POOL

From Page 28

dren, Justin, Jennifer, and Jill, who grew up under the coaching of Bill and Jean Sakovich, were equally as shocked at the closure. Word of the closure rapidly spread through the internet and literally, around the world, those swimmers and families of yesteryears are signing the petition to assist," Pierce said.

"Saipan residents participated in many programs offered at the public pool facility; competitive swimming, Red Cross swim lessons, lifesaving and lifeguard certification, synchronized swimming, water polo, and masters swimming. Swimming has kept my family and I safe in the water, enriched our lives, and opened many doors of opportunities, as well as forming lifetime friendships worldwide," she added.

Meanwhile, IPI Special Projects senior vice president Viola Alepuyo said they are aware of the clamor to keep the pool open.

"Are we amenable having the commission authorize No. 1 and tabling No. 2 until IPI is awarded the RFP for the Marpi property? We are amenable to that, only because we don't want the almost 100 people to lose their jobs if Mariana Resort closes down and we don't want the community to lose the pool. There's been an outcry in the community and in response to the community and DPL, we sacrifice that request (allowing them to open the integrated resort in phases) so we could move forward," Alepuyo said. ***(With reports from Jon Perez)***

Run for the Coconut revived; SIS, SCS split honors

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan International School and Saipan Community School runners head out to the course along Beach Road during last Thursday's Run for the Coconut.

The last wave of runners heads out to the course. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Nearly 60 elementary and middle School runners from Saipan International School and Saipan Community School raced along Beach Road during the Run for the Coconut last Thursday.

The Run for the Coconut will be an annual meet between SIS and SCS. It was used to be a dual meet between SCS and Tanapag Elementary School in the 1990s. Upon returning to the island, SIS headmaster Ron Snyder proposed the idea of reviving the race to SCS principal Amanda Dunn and the rest is history. In the Run for the Coconut, there are two coconut trophies and the winner of each division gets to bring the trophy to their school and display the trophy for a year.

Parents from both schools lined the path to cheer on the young runners, while students from the SIS Rotary Interact Club volunteered as timers, guards, and monitors along the course to ensure that the students were safe.

Two runners are in a tight race. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"It was great to see all of the participants from our school and SCS enjoying the event even with the bad weather in the beginning," said SIS Rotary Interact Club president Prunella Pelagrino.

This year, the Tsunamis captured the coconut trophy for the elementary division. SCS scored 18 points against SIS' 23 to prevail in a close fight for the division trophy (points were awarded based on how runners from each school finished and early finishers got low points so the school will the lower total won).

In the individual results, SIS third grader Kelley McCallion was the top finisher as he clocked in at 5:38 in the one-mile course. Rounding out the ribbon spots were David Ye (6:00) and Jose Sablan (6:27), also from SIS. SIS' other runners were Finn Altizer, Logan Benson, Beatrice Gross, Phoenix Gross, and Kyanna Cabrera, while Daniel Malus, Eugen So, Lola Guerrero, and Abbie Kim raced for SCS.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan International School students and teacher Kathy Ruszala, second right, pose for a photo after the race.

In the middle school division, the Geckos were denied a perfect score by Isaiah Aleksenko, who earned the first place honors with a time of 13:13. Dylan Mister (14:28) took home the second place ribbon and teammate Danny Lee notched the third place ribbon, edging out his sister Danna. Cathy Woo, Connel Hartig, and Christian Newman completed the Geckos' roster, while Hilah Bacani, Daniel Kang, Miles Timmons, and Jii Lee were among the top finishers for SCS.

In addition to the 23 bibbed runners representing the two schools, over 30 other elementary and middle school students came out to support their schools by running the course. ***(PR)***

NMSA supports PSS Sports Roundtable meetings

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Public School System Athletic Department director Nick Gross talks to volunteers and teachers during a referee refresher course at the Marianas High School last month. Gross and PSS will be holding a series of meetings with sports stakeholders in the CNMI.

In an effort to bring community stakeholders together to discuss Public School System Athletic Program development, PSS Athletic Program director Nick Gross will be hosting Sports Roundtable meetings on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

"In recent board meetings, NMSA members discussed working alongside other stakeholders to gain information that can be used for strategic planning purposes," said Northern Marianas Sports Association president Mike White.

The NMSA board duly recognizes that it is important to get our communities collective input regarding sport opportunities and how best the PSS and NMSA can work together to address the needs of our community. Therefore, it is essential that any government office or other school organization that supports sports programs attend these events.

"In my dual role, I can see that there are gaps and overlaps in sports programs administration in the CNMI," NMASA board member and NMI Volleyball Association president Laurie Peterka said. "It's essential that all stakeholders are identified and come to the table so that all aspects and angles of sports administration can be reviewed and discussed."

Peterka identified several stakeholders, such as Division of Youth Services under DCCA, Public Health, NMC, MVA, Parks and Rec as well as the Governor's Office, the Legislature, and the mayor's offices.

"All around us, there are community groups, formally organized or not, as well as the government agencies that support these community programs. "How much better can we do with the limited resources we have if we are all working together?" the NMIVA head added.

Meanwhile, Gross will be presenting the current vision of the newly formed PSS athletic programs department and gathering local stakeholder inputs to ensure equity within the CNMI in regards to athletic opportunities for our kids. Rota, Tinian, and Saipan have unique needs, as well as strengths and weaknesses that he'd like to identify with a select group of community stakeholders from each island.

"Please spread the word regarding this opportunity to share ideas, network, and work to organize ourselves to avoid duplicating activities," Gross said.

Gross envisions a future where government agencies and non-profit groups plan and implement sporting/wellness activities for our youth together.

"This roundtable allows us an opportunity to streamline operations and avoid duplicating activities that we could collaborate on," he added.

Gross will be conducting sports roundtables on Tinian at the JC Cafe on Sep. 27 from 9am to 1pm (30 pax) and at the Rota Mayor's Office on Oct. 4 from 9am to 1pm (30 pax) as well. The Saipan roundtable will take place on Oct. 11 from 9am to 1pm at Pacific Islands Club. Contact Gross at nick.gross@cnmipss.org to reserve your space. Lunch is included and there is no cost to attend these events. ***(PR)***

A's wait; Phillies, Pirates, and D-Backs out

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Sports

Tiger caps off amazing comeback with a win

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Pool may remain operational

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The community's call to keep the Kan Pacific Pool open may not fall on deaf ears after all.

The only Olympic-sized pool in the Commonwealth could remain operational after the CNMI Lottery Commission, during its board meeting yesterday, allowed Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC to take over the management of the Mariana Resort & Spa and other facilities under Kan Pacific's care. Paperwork for the IPI takeover will be done this week.

Please see related story on Page 1

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Swimmers practice at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool.

Northern Mariana Islands Swimming Federation president John Hirsh has yet to hear official word from IPI nor the Department of Public Lands, but has welcomed this development.

"If they will be able to find a way to save the pool, we will be incredibly grateful to the administration and all those involved in the solution," said Hirsh, who early this month sent a letter to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, appealing to the government to step in and keep the pool. "This pool does not only benefit the swimmers, but also other members of the community and the closure will definitely have a negative impact to us."

Kan Pacific had earlier informed NMISF and its three member clubs (Tsunami Swimming Center Saipan, Saipan Swim Club, and Dolphin Club Saipan) that the pool will cease operation at the end of this month, as the extension of the lease agreement between the government (DPL) and the company will expire on Sept. 30.

After Kan Pacific's announcement, the community and even those off-island were alarmed and could not hide their disappointment over the closure of the 50-meter pool. Later, an online petition was launched to save the pool and as of last night, it has gathered over 7,000 signatories.

One of them is former CNMI swimmer Carol Lynn Pierce, who is now based in Virginia with her family, but has been in touch with members of the local swimming community.

"I was deeply saddened to hear of the closing of the public pool on Saipan. My chil-

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Pacific Islands Club Saipan's Paulo Rafols goes up for a shot against Imperial Pacific's Henry Cruzada during the first quarter of their game in the Emon Lodge/IT&E caging last Sunday at the Koblerville Gymnasium.

PIC routs Imperial Pacific

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Pacific Islands Club Saipan got off to a strong start after dominating Imperial Pacific, 67-51, in the second game in the 2018 Emon Lodge No. 179 Brotherhood/IT&E Basketball League last Sunday at the Koblerville Gymnasium.

PIC Saipan jumped to a 9-1 lead in the first half of the opening quarter and never looked back to join Armatech on the win column of the 10-team field. Paulo Rafols scored 4 points in PIC Saipan's early run, including the squad's first basket, while shooter James Abuy also knocked down his

See PIC on Page 26

GCA 1 stays perfect

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Grace Christian Academy 1 swept Mt. Carmel School in their make-up game yesterday to remain unscathed in the middle school division of the 2018-2019 Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association Volleyball League.

The Eagles defeated the Knights in the first set by double digits, 25-10, before having a harder time clinching the victory in the second, 25-20. GCA 1 went on to complete the sweep after coasting to a 15-2 win in the third set. The Eagles-Knights tiff was originally scheduled last Sept. 11, but was suspended due to rain.

With the triumph, GCA 1 has beaten all its opponents in the league and the streaking squad improved its record to 8-0.

Before its rescheduled game

See GCA on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Grace Christian Academy 1's Hyejin Elliot digs the ball during an earlier game in the middle school division of the 2018-2019 Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association Volleyball League at the GCA court in Navy Hill.